



Young troupes the future

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Designers aim to enable

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Saving a fashion brand's image



Photo provided by Pierre Cardin China

Pierre Cardin, the first fashion brand into China after its doors opened, just finished its 2009 Spring/Summer show in Shanghai. The brand is striking back to reclaim the Shanghai market in a bid to "renew" its image.

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to orphans



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Safety campaign targets food additives

By Han Manman

Beijing quality authorities will begin a local enforcement campaign to stamp out use of industrial additives in locally-produced food. The move is a cooperation with the city's Food and Drug Administration, and will be followed by a four-month safety campaign by the central government,

The campaign, conducted by nine central government departments, is the country's latest move to prevent another tainted-milk scandal and restore consumer trust.

"The tainted-milk scandal exposed the use of illegal materials in food products. The use of non-food substances are not isolated incidents. Instead, they are typical of the industry," Chen Xiaohong, vice minister of health said during a national teleconference in Beijing. "If these problems are not solved, food scares will recur."

The minister said the campaign will be split into three phases, with companies first asked to perform internal checks over the next month.

Authorities will spend two months inspecting producers of meat, dairy and other products rich in protein, deemed "high-risk," and conduct market checks.

The third phase will focus on stemming the supply of illegal food additives by targeting producers and punishing companies that use such chemicals.

Illegal chemicals identified in past domestic food scares will be among those targeted, including malachite green, a carcinogen used to treat fungal infections in fish, and the carcinogen Sudan red, Chen said.

The results of the investigation will be released after its completion in March.

The move comes amid efforts to address concerns both home and abroad over how the country is managing its worst food safety crisis in years. The Ministry of Health said last week that six babies died and 294,000 infants had urinary complications from drinking infant formula contaminated with melamine, an industrial chemical.

Besides the safety campaign on domestic foods, the country is stepping up its checks of foreign imports.

The government's quality supervisor said early this week that several foods imported from Europe and US were found to be unsafe.

These products included chocolate from US, brandy from Italy, seasoning from Great Britain, dairy products from Spain and chocolate-containing food from Belgium, the General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine (AQSIQ) said on its Web site Monday.

All problematic products have been destroyed or returned without entering the domestic market, it said. The administration asked all provincial Entry-Exit Inspection and Quarantine Bureaus to enforce checks on such foods for the next 90 days, it said on its Web site.

Experts said the government's announcement shows it is becoming more transparent and active in making the public aware of substandard products from overseas.



The investigation will focus on food made by small factories, as their products are poorly regulated.

IC Photo

Bird flu enters peak season

By Venus Lee

In response to the outbreak of H5 bird flu in Hong Kong, the Ministry of Health has taken precautions to prevent the nationwide spread of the pandemic virus, and to remind the public to avoid handling dead poultry.

According to the Information and Early Warning on National Public Health Emergencies issued by the ministry, it is the peak season for respiratory ailments like influenza. The risk of pneumonia of unknown origin and avian influenza infections in both poultry and humans cannot be eradicated.

Mao Qun'an, the ministry's spokesperson, said people should reduce their contact with poultry, especially the dead, as much as possible. "This is the most effective way to prevent the spread of the virus to humans. The detection of any abnormal illness must be reported to related ministry departments immediately," he said.

The Beijing Center for Disease Control and Prevention said the city has not been affected. Beijing established a complete epidemic surveillance system, and the epidemic situation is reported daily by 24-hour supervision stations.

Three dead chickens tested positive for bird flu in Hong Kong, prompting the city to suspend poultry imports for 21 days and cull 90,000 birds as of Tuesday. There has been no report of human infection.

Hong Kong's biggest bird flu outbreak came in 1997, when six people died after the H5N1 virus made the leap from fowl to man. In response, the government culled all 1.5 million birds in the city. Authorities did the same to stamp out another outbreak in 2001, killing 306,000 birds from the markets and 951,000 from farms.

Since 2003, at least 245 people around the world have died from bird flu, according to figures from the World Health Organization.



The Environmental Hygiene Department disposing of all fowl suspected of having bird flu.

IC Photo

Tobacco companies pulled from charity award list

By Huang Daohen

The nation's six top tobacco companies, which donated 963 million yuan to charity, have been removed from the 2008 China Charity Awards list due to protests from health departments, civil organizations and the Internet.

On December 5, when the highest level charity awards were to be announced, the official Web site of the event organizer, the China Disease Control Center, posted a statement that it would remove all tobacco companies from its list.

The Civil Affairs Ministry wanted to award the tobacco companies for charity activities, but all sectors of society are firmly opposed, the statement said.

The ministry posted protest letters from four organizations, including the World Health Organization, on its Web site.

The complaints and opposition were the deciding factor to oust tobacco companies from the list, Wang Zhenyao, head of the Social Welfare and Charity Promotion Department at the Ministry of Civil Affairs, told a recent press conference.

After the list of nominees was published in late November, many organizations wrote to the Civil Affairs Ministry to question the selection and called on the organizing committee to disqualify the tobacco companies, Wang said.

The ministry contacted the tobacco companies, and ensuing discussion led to the removal of tobacco companies - including the China National Tobacco Corporation, whose donation tops domestic firms with 805 million yuan.

The New Exploration Health Research and Development Centre, a non-government organization, was the first to write a letter to recommend the denial of awards to the tobacco companies.

Giving charity awards to tobacco companies violates the Tobacco Control Framework Treaty and would do irreparable harm to the country's international image, the letter said.

WHO in China sent a fax to the Civil Affairs Ministry on December 4.

Some overseas organizations will not accept donations from tobacco companies or other companies which are not environmentally friendly, said Pierre Miegé, a sociologist at Beijing Normal University.

Enterprises can be charitable, but companies to be awarded must not harm the public through their operations, Miegé said.

First gold farming company goes legal in Wuhan

By Annie Wei

In the virtual world, China has long been known as the land of gold farms.

Thousands of young people have worked illegally for these online farms, where a player "farms" items of value in the game for sale in real-world currency. Many farmers reported poor work conditions and long hours.

But this week, a young man named Li Yang in Wuhan registered the country's first legal "gold-farming" company: Liyang Internet Technology Service Company.

Li, a graduate from Huazhong Agricultural University, used to have a stable job. His passion for the Internet and online games led his virtual currency to surpass his yuan.

He quit his job and persuaded his parents to invest in his new gold-farming business.

Li's business was initially reported to the local Public Security Bureau (PSB) as an "illegal Internet cafe." The PSB told the local Industrial and Commercial Bureau it was coaching business, not an Internet cafe.

The local newspaper *Changjiang Times* reported there are 3,000 people in Wuhan working as online game coaches, with an average income ranging from 500 to 2,000 yuan. Many people in the field are between ages 18 and 25 and work more than 12 hours per day.

Wang Zhong, deputy manager of the Industrial and Commercial Bureau, said Li's business license was granted to give his office

access to trade information.

The law did not forbid online coaching or gold-farming, so the bureau allowed Li his license to "see what happens," Wang said.

The paperwork with the bureau states Li's business provides "Internet consultancy and technology services," rather than "gold-farming or online gaming coaching."

Authorities said the company cannot hire workers under age 16, and people from outside the city have to register a temporary residence with the local PSB and be guaranteed two days off work every week.

Wang said although they did not regulate the work hours, they knew each employee worked eight to 10 hours per day.

So far, Li's company is the only

one of its kind in the country. No similar company is registered in Beijing yet.

Online game makers refused to comment, but many companies have attempted to block the use of gold-farming services by stating in their End User License Agreements and Terms of Service that any and all game assets – from the player's character to any items they may be carrying – remain the sole property of the company itself.

Many have aggressively shut down any accounts found to be used for gold farming.

Tao Hongkai, a professor from Huazhong Normal University, opposed the license. Tao said it would only encourage children to play more and increase Internet addiction.

Robin-hood Chinese New Year's Gala challenges CCTV



The gala is casting.

Photo provided by Shi Mengqi

By Venus Lee

CCTV's Chinese New Year Gala, the nation's most-viewed yearly TV event, will be challenged by a grass-roots gala effort next year.

Shi Mengqi, 36, is the initiator and director of the grass-roots gala. He calls his gala the "Shanzhai," or Robin Hood, version. It is a hodgepodge of volunteer performers. He said, he intends to challenge CCTV because he is unsatisfied with its screening procedure, and said the gala is not designed for the ordinary viewer.

"I was present at one of CCTV's New Year Galas. The audience was nothing but high officials and rich people," Shi said.

He said many brilliant programs were often cut.

Directing the gala will give him a chance to see how difficult the job is, he said. Shi opened CCSTV.net (China Countryside TV) to attract attention from the online community.

Ten volunteers with common interests joined him to form an organizing committee to prepare for the gala. Their responsibility ranges from network technology, programming, quality auditing, arranging the gala site and getting equipment sponsorship. They will select interesting programs submitted through the Internet.

So far, 700 people have sent demo videos since Shi began to prepare two weeks ago.

Shi plans to arrange a three-hour show. The gala will be novel, heart-warming, funny and lively, but its most distinctive feature is approachability, he said.

"We will invite performers to come to rehearsal before the live broadcast – if their demos meet our standards and they are free on New Year's Eve," he said. Shi hopes his "Robin Hood" gala will be attended by students and migrant workers.

However, the performers and staff at the gala are not paid for their appearance. "One of my friends is willing to provide his hotel lounge for the gala, and we received some equipment from many volunteers," Shi said.

He said the gala will be transmitted live via Internet in tandem with CCTV broadcast. There are several streaming media interested in cooperation. "We are still negotiating. Anyway, I think people will have more choices this Lunar New Year's Eve."

Shanxi prosecutors say CCTV reporter took bribes

By Han Manman

The Supreme People's Procuratorate (SPP) confirmed Wednesday that a Beijing CCTV reporter detained by Shanxi Province prosecutors is under investigation for accepting bribes.

It also said the Xinghualing District People's Procuratorate in Taiyuan city, Shanxi, had jurisdiction over the case, and the SPP confirmed the reporter's detention.

The reporter, identified as Li Min, was taken from her home in Beijing by four plainclothes officers sent by the Xinghualing district procuratorate last Thursday night. They entered her apartment claiming they were there to check for a floor leak.

She was taken after investigating whether Xinghualing prosecutors abused their powers while investigating a businessman, the *Beijing Youth Daily* reported Monday.

A month ago, Li visited the Xinghualing district procuratorate in Shanxi to cover an economic dispute.

The procuratorate was reported to have favored a local businessman, and sent prosecutors to arrest a Cantonese businessman surnamed Wu, the *Beijing Youth Daily* reported.

According to Li's previous report, the prosecutors detained Wu several times on charges of bribery, contract fraud and false accusations, but he was released each time due to insufficient evidence. Wu was arrested in November.

Shanxi prosecutors charged Li with accepting bribes: "a car worth about 200,000 yuan" from the younger brother of businessman Wu. The prosecutors said they were legally entitled to investigate Li.

Li's attorney Zhou Ze from

Beijing-based Zhanda law firm went to Shanxi Wednesday to investigate. He said both the Xinghualing office and supreme procuratorate had broken the law.

Zhou said the office was not a qualified investigator and should withdraw from the case. It was also inappropriate for the SPP to approve the detention as the district procuratorate had a conflict of interest with the journalist, Zhou said.

Zhou said the car cannot be called a bribe: it was given as a gift by Wu, whom Li is currently dating. "As the brother is courting her, it is perfectly normal for her to accept a present," he said.

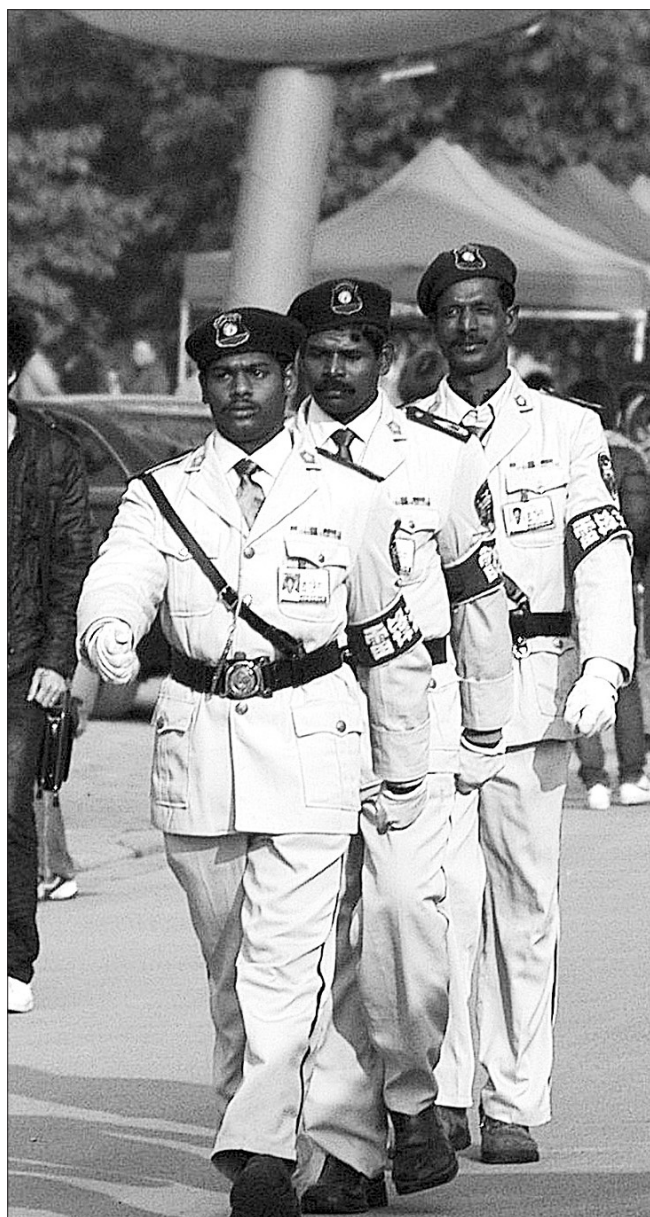
"The corruption charge is nothing but revenge," Zhou said, adding that the local procuratorate took advantage of the opportunity, since Li slammed it in a prior report.

Cao Shuchang, a lawyer of Beijing King & Capital Law firm, said, "It is reasonable for Xinghualing district prosecutors to arrest Li, since she was alleged to have [accepted a bribe]," Chao said, adding. "However, this journalist had a prior conflict with the procuratorate, so it should not be the Xinghualing prosecutors handling the case."

"Current law only says individual inspectors or judges should avoid a case when they have a conflict of interest with the party. But there is no regulation which precludes the entire procuratorate from involvement," Zheng Xu, a professor of China University of Political Science and Law, said.

The higher level procuratorate has the right to appoint another district procuratorate to handle the case, which would be more just, fair and transparent, Zheng said.

Chongqing outsourcing, hires Indian guards



Three guards from India patrol Chongqing Yangrenjie. Their uniform includes an arm band that says they will serve like Lei Feng, a resilient icon known for his selfless and modest spirit. Chongqing Economic Times reported each made 1,000 yuan per month.

CFP Photo

After reform comes fashion

By Gan Tian

Pierre Cardin, a fashion brand that was one of the first to enter China after the country's reforms, just finished its 2009 Spring/Summer show in Shanghai. The old brand is "striking back" in Shanghai to "renew" its image, Fang Fang, CEO of Pierre Cardin China, said.



The designer organized China's first fashion show in 1981.

Bringing in fashion

The brand, though well-known in China, has wavered in popularity the last 30 years.

Over the last half century, Pierre Cardin has assumed every role: from visionary designer to tireless businessman. In China, he is sometimes mistaken for the French president. Aside from rethinking clothes, he also revolutionized transportation and environmental design. But China knows him best for his fashion brand.

In 1970, Cardin presented dresses and coats with kimono sleeves and large round cut-outs. In 1978, the company entered China. He set up the first boutiques, and Cardin has had a market presence ever since.

Cardin's idea was deemed crazy, due in no small part to the stark reality he faced. Fashion and chic were long dismissed in China as bourgeois. Although the door was open, plain blue, green and black still dominated Chinese clothing.

When it came to fashion, the China of the late 1970s was very much guarded against the kaleidoscopic outside world. Cardin's bold move helped to unleash a long dormant enthusiasm for fashion.

In 1981, Cardin purchased Maxim's in Paris. He opened

branches of the restaurant in New York, London and Beijing.

Cardin's great success in China is due in part to a woman named Song Huaigui, the general agent for Pierre Cardin in China and the manager of Maxim's restaurant.

Song met Cardin at an art exhibition in Paris in 1980, which began a 30-year working relationship. They brought China its first fashion show the following year.

The agent business model was also brought to China by Pierre Cardin. It partnered with the local Tianjin Jinda Garment, which was expected to better understand the Chinese market.

Jinda solidified Pierre Cardin's reputation by opening shops in Tianjin.

In the following years, the brand signed contracts with different groups and companies to sell the brand's products according to different lines. They were given the authority to design their own products. After being recognized by Pierre Cardin, the products could be sold on the Chinese market.

Wang Xu, 48, an office worker, remembered that his wife always bought Pierre Cardin pants and suits for him. "We never thought of it as fashionable. We had to go to the office, and there were not many options

for formal wear at the time," Wang said.

A fading business

The brand struggled in 1990s, gradually losing its prestige.

Agents did a good job in spreading the brand's name all over the market its first few years, but the far reaching agreements gave agents too much power.

The local designs lost the sense of unity Pierre Cardin's line once had. "Many of the products were too commercialized," Fang Fang, the present CEO of the company, said.

Second, it never tackled China's regional problems. There were too many agents all fighting for spots.

Pierre Cardin has a collection of down coats, which sold well in northern China. Many agents fought to control the same region and lost Shanghai.

"My wife thought these dresses were too ordinary in design, though good quality. So, she decided to look for other brands," Wang said.

Sensing the Chinese market is large and profitable, the world's largest luxury fashion labels came running.

Pierre Cardin has also competed with an avalanche of fake goods and falling profits. In March 2004, Chinese Industry

and Commerce Bureau investigators shut down a showcase of fake Pierre Cardin products at the country's International Clothing and Accessories Fair.

Global fashion marketing Web site Just Style reported that the products, made by Chinese firm Italy Pierre Cardin, bore a nearly identical logo of the real Pierre Cardin, officials from the French company said.

Italy Pierre Cardin, they said, had been the subject of an earlier trade ban.

"After we filed a lawsuit, the Italy Pierre Cardin company, registered in Hong Kong, should have ceased its activities," Song said at the case.

Song died shortly before the autumn and winter 2006/07 fashion show, and Fang took over the business in 2005.

Its chaotic agent system dealt a heavy blow to the brand's image. Fang said when she took over the business in 2005, she felt its image was "a mess."

Striking back

Now Pierre Cardin has some counters in Shanghai, where it sells only shirts, ties, bags and shoes. Fang said she intends to bring back the boutiques.

"Actually, we had a base in Shanghai 10 years ago, but we lost the market by focusing on



Pierre Cardin paid a visit to China in 1979.

the north," Fang said.

Fang's first struggle was to open a flagship store and sign a contract with us, [it won't happen]," Fang said.

"Because of the agent system, the company could not open a flagship shop in any area without challenging its agents' profits," Fang said. The company never had a flagship store anywhere, which Fang said hurt its image.

"Unless all the agents agree that the company should open a flagship store and sign a contract with us, [it won't happen]," Fang said.

Fang organized the agents to meet Tuesday on this issue.

Though facing a downturn, the brand still had an advantage in classic products. *China Fashion Weekly* conducted a survey on profits of fashion brands in the Beijing market last year. It showed that the top sales volume of male shirts was Pierre Cardin. It increased 8.53 percent over the same period in 2006.

However, the female dress and other lines of Pierre Cardin showed nothing.

Since Fang assumed her position, the company has held two fashion shows every year, at which it releases its newest products. Fang also brought in a jeans and casual collection. "We want our consumers to see that Pierre Cardin can also be young and passionate," Fang said.

She also said there were products imported from France, and the company exerts more control over the designs of its agents. "We want to put more Pierre Cardin style in these designs," Fang said.



Pierre Cardin hopes to renew its image with biannual fashion shows.

Photos provided by Pierre Cardin China

US commerce secretary owes Chinese Americans an apology

Presidential cabinet members are seldom without their critics, but the nomination of Bill Richardson as the US Secretary of Commerce has ignited the fury of an unexpected source: Chinese Americans.



Bill Richardson named as Commerce Secretary last week.

CFP Photo

As many as 9,000 Chinese Americans have pledged their support to an online petition protesting Richardson's appointment in any cabinet position due to the New Mexico governor's handling of the nearly decade-old case of Chinese American Wen Ho Lee, a former nuclear scientist at Los Alamos National Laboratory.

The group says that Richardson's refusal to acknowledge having made serious errors in the case makes it a moral imperative to oppose his nomination to Barack Obama's Cabinet.

"This was the major Chinese American civil rights case of the last 30 years," Albert Wang, a California-based physician, said, "And there was a feeling among many Chinese Americans, particularly in Silicon

Valley, that Richardson did a lot to promote the notion that all Chinese Americans are potential spies."

The group has already gathered more than 9,000 electronic signatures protesting Richardson's nomination as head of the federal department dealing with business and industry.

Roger Hu, a 30-year-old Silicon Valley engineer who was an Obama delegate at the Democratic National Convention, has written an "open letter" to Obama and the transition team saying Richardson should not be nominated or confirmed for any Cabinet-level position.

In the letter, which appears on his blog at notorich.blogspot.com, Hu said he became aware of the Lee case when he was about to

enter his senior year at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

"Richardson's actions were simply inexcusable," he said.

Hu, Wang and well-known Chinese American human rights activists such as Henry Der plan to state in a new letter to Obama, as said at wenholee.org, that Richardson's actions violated Lee's right to due process by firing him without the required legal notice. It will also accuse Richardson of promoting Lee's indictment when there was no evidence that he had engaged in espionage.

Until Richardson apologizes for his actions, the group says, it will continue to oppose his nomination to the Cabinet.

(San Joes Mercury News)

Background

In March 1999, Wen Ho Lee was abruptly fired from his job as an atomic scientist at the Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico, on the grounds that



Wen Ho Lee

he was a Chinese spy leaking US state secrets. He was put into solitary confinement for 270 days, and indicted on 59 charges related to leaking classified government documents to Chinese spies.

As Secretary of Energy at the time, Bill Richardson played a direct role in this case, since he was the one who fired Lee from his job and accused him of spying. Some reports claimed Richardson leaked negative information about Lee to the press.

Ultimately, Lee was found guilty on only one of the 59 charges – he downloaded classified data into his computer. His lawyers note that much of that material was already available to the public, and the downloaded data was restricted, but not top secret.

While downloading restricted government information is a serious crime, many question whether the pre-conviction treatment of Lee was justified. Then-President Bill Clinton publicly apologized to Lee for mistreatment during the trial. At the end of the trial, Lee also received an apology from Judge James Parker, who presided over the case, but Richardson was not quite as remorseful.

For many Chinese Americans, however, the issue is not just about protecting nuclear secrets, it is about racial profiling. They maintain that Lee was unfairly targeted for his ethnic Chinese background.

(By Huang Daohen)

Dialogue

By Huang Daohen

Beijing Today interviewed George Koo, a retired business consultant based in Detroit, Michigan and an organizer of the group protesting Bill Richardson's nomination as US Commerce Secretary.

Q: What was the original reason for your group's fierce national campaign against Richardson?

A: The move arose from the fact that Richardson never owned up to his responsibility in the case of Wen Ho Lee. Richardson's actions, to some extent, legitimized racial profiling. To this day, the FBI continues to assert that ethnic Chinese are potential spies for China.

Those of us protesting the appointment are asking Richardson to disavow racial profil-

ing as an accepted practice. He should do this, and he can do so by simply admitting he made an error in judgment.

Q: Do you think your campaign will create tension between Latinos and Chinese Americans as Richardson is the highest ranking Latino appointee in the administration?

A: The protest has nothing to do with Latinos and Chinese Americans. We applaud the appointment of the most talented and able men and women, regardless of ethnicity, to serve our country.

However, so long as the Wen Ho Lee case is a blot on Richardson's record, we challenge the notion that he is among the most qualified to serve.

Q: How many signatures do you

expect your petition to get?

A: We do not have expectations. The more people who join us, the more powerful our voice will be.

Q: Did you try to contact Richardson himself?

A: No, because we do not think it is necessary to do so. We do not believe him, and there is evidence showing he lied in Lee's case.

Q: How can you ensure that Obama reads your open letter?

A: We will submit the petition to several members of Obama's transition team. This will ensure that Obama will be aware of the material.

Perhaps the Obama transition team is unaware of the baggage that Richardson carries. It is our duty to call this matter to its attention.

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北京东方新天地首层AA31 Tel/Fax: +86 10 85186397
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2F-215A, Intime Lotte Department Store, 88, Wangfujing Avenue, Beijing
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Are US assets a good buy for Chinese automakers?

By Huang Daohen

While US authorities debate whether and how to bail out the Big Three automakers, the prospects of Chinese companies acquiring US auto assets is gaining momentum after the administration lent a substantial amount to one of its own auto manufacturers, Chery Automobile Cooperation.

The Export-Import Bank of China, the nation's policy lender, granted Chery a 10-billion-yuan export credit on December 7 to support its overseas expansion, the *Beijing Youth Daily* reported Wednesday.

According to the bank's agreement, credit granted by the bank will be used to support Chery's exports, including export credit, technical equipment import, international settlement and trade financing.

Industry insiders and analysts dispute whether this can be regarded as a preparation for Chery to acquire overseas assets. There were reports on Wednesday that Chery intends to buy assets from Chrysler, with the help of the 10-billion-yuan loan.

However, Yin Tongyao, chairman of Chery, said the company has no intention to buy US auto assets in the current market condition, the *Shanghai Securities News* reported.

Companies should be cautious in acquiring US assets, Wen Yijun, an auto analyst with Orient Securities, said. It is risky for Chinese automakers to acquire US auto assets and brands now, he said.

Wen said Chinese automakers are still not ready to take the



Chery's 10-billion-yuan loan may be preparation for acquiring overseas assets.

CFP Photo

overseas plunge. "The US auto giants are only divesting their burden and units that aren't profitable or competitive."

Aside from Chery's alleged acquisition of Chrysler, Chang'an Auto is also in talks with Ford to take over the Swedish luxury brand Volvo, the *National Business Daily* reported.

Wen said Chinese automakers should pay more attention to

the seemingly profitable overseas assets. "I am worried about how domestic carmakers can maintain the value of the international brand after acquisition."

The domestic auto industry is also experiencing a hard time, Wen said. The situation worsened in November due to the continuing slide of the overseas market and shrinking domestic consumption.

November statistics show total car sales volumes dropped by over 10 percent year-on-year, and the year-on-year sales decline of 22 mainstream automakers reached 16 percent, the most drastic drop in the past six years.

Chinese automakers should be committed to improving their product quality rather than buying auto assets in the US, Wen said.

Song Hongbing sees a dark future for US recession

By Jin Zhu

Song Hongbing, author of bestselling *The Currency War*, has become famous for predicting the current financial crisis in his book.

In June, Song said the crisis would worsen. A month later, the two financial giants, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, were taken over by the US government. Some investment banks, such as Lehman Brothers fell apart.

"The worst times are yet to come," Song said when talking about the current financial crisis with *Beijing Today*.

Caution from a cup of coffee

Song returned to Beijing from the US last December. At that time, the subprime debt crisis was just beginning, and few expected the financial crisis that would sweep the whole world half a year later.

Song said it was a cup of coffee that made him realize the coming of a crisis.

On a work day last February, Song, who had worked for both

Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac for five years, went to have his usual cup of coffee. However, to his surprise, Fannie Mae had stopped providing free coffee.

"When a big company, with assets valued around US \$1.4 trillion (9.6 trillion yuan) and more than 6,000 staff members, starts to save money on the details, it is highly likely that the company is in crisis," he said.

Shortly after that, Song learned that Fannie Mae had a 40 percent slump in profits in December. "It was guaranteed that a crisis was around the corner," Song wrote in *The Currency War*, published last June.

The second tide of the financial crisis is inevitable

Song said since the current financial crisis is in a "lull," both the stock market and financial markets are more stable. It seems everything has been uneventful. However, he said more serious problems are around the corner.

"This year will not be the peak," Song said.

He said a second tide will come between next April and September. "A crisis will sweep the commercial bank system in the US next year. The default rate of junk bonds will continue to rise, and the US economy will recess further," he said.

Losses for Chinese banks

The current financial crisis has already hit some Chinese financial institutions. Song said with the deepening of the financial crisis, more financial institutions will go bankrupt. It will cause an all-around credit crunch and promote the interest rate of the US dollar to rise.

"At present, it is generally believed that the interest rate of US dollar will not rise in the future among many Chinese banks. Therefore, once the rate rises, Chinese banks will take a great loss," he said.

Secret of Song's predictions

Talking about his prediction, Song said the financial crisis has



Song Hongbing

CFP Photo

developed according to the principles of basic logic, common sense and economics.

"As long as we have correct statistical data and reasonable logic, it is quite easy to predict the coming crisis. I cannot understand why the Wall Street executives did not state clearly the coming crisis last year," he said.

The question remains in his mind.

Microsoft follows black screen with price cut

By Venus Lee

The impact of the "black screen of death" is not over, but Microsoft is already beginning a new anti-piracy strategy. Microsoft China announced Monday that it will cut the price of Windows XP Home Traditional Chinese edition and Office Home and Student 2007.

Microsoft China announced that the price of its Traditional Chinese Window XP Home will drop to 399 yuan from 960 yuan this month, and will remain at this price until the end of the next year. The 58 percent drop makes Chinese Windows the world's cheapest.

Beside Windows XP, the price of Office Home and Student 2007 will be permanently reduced to 398 yuan from 699 yuan starting next month, but Office Home and Student's promotional version is selling for 199 yuan from National Day through Spring Festival.

Microsoft will provide customers with free phone support through March 2009.

Qiu Limeng, manager of information at Microsoft China, said the company was responding to Chinese consumer opinion. "Windows XP and Office now cost 18 yuan per month assuming they are used for three years," she said, comparing the cost to broadband Internet.

Wang Jianhua, the president of Lianbang, a software retailer, said the 199 yuan promotion during National Day was very successful. "Its sales volume grew rapidly. Although the single product profits declined, the ultimate profits of Microsoft products increased by appealing to more consumers," Wang said.

Many netizens and IT workers see the price drop as a new anti-privacy strategy. After the black screen of death rolled out, Microsoft's image was stained. Yan Xiaohong, vice director of the National Copyright Administration, also said that Microsoft failed to recognize the economic gap between developed and developing counties. "Microsoft should price its products according to China's actual condition," he said.

VW promotes children's environmental awareness

By Han Manman

The national youth flash competition, initiated by the Ministry of Environmental Protection and the Volkswagen Group, closed early this week in Beijing.

The competition is part of the "Volkswagen Green Future Environmental Education Initiative" and is intended to motivate young people to join the environmental protection campaign and show their enthusiasm to achieve a green Beijing.

It is a three-year environmental education program that started in China last year.

Students denounce professor as counterrevolutionary

By Huang Daohen

A blog post half a month ago, titled "Students denounced me as a counterrevolutionary," shattered the tranquil life of Yang Shiqun, a professor at the Shanghai-based East China University of Political Science and Law.

According to the post, two of Yang's female students accused him of being a counterrevolutionary because of remarks he made in class about the country's current culture, politics and government administration.

"I remember that two girls came to see me after class and denounced me for daring to criticize Chinese culture and the gov-

ernment! They even had tears in their eyes," Yang said in his blog.

Yang, however, said he had a right to express his views, adding, "If you don't feel like listening to me in class, then you can choose not to attend class."

To Yang's surprise, the students went to the Public Security Bureau and Shanghai's municipal education committee to report his "counterrevolutionary remarks," and an investigation ensued, the post said.

The blog post was made on November 21 and was taken down four days later, during which the page views and comments skyrocketed. As of press time, the site had more than 3,000 com-

ments, most using heated words.

Yang did not expect the Internet to have such a powerful impact: Some netizens copied his blog posting and circulated it online, drawing the media's attention.

Yang told *Beijing Today* he now receives phone calls from all over the country every day. He does not have a mobile phone, so the calls have to go to his office. The school decided to take down from its Web site the telephone directory for its teaching staff.

When asked about the two students who argued with him after class, Yang said he could not remember their names or which lecture it was.

"I definitely criticized aspects of traditional Chinese culture in the context of the course contents. If there are facets of traditional culture that are linked to today's society, I would make the connection and criticize the government," Yang said.

Most people, including netizens and well-known media critics, sided with Yang, declaring that a professor should be granted the academic freedom to comment on social issues and criticize the government.

Meanwhile, Shanghai police, when contacted by *Beijing Today*, said Wednesday they did not file a case on the counterrevolutionary complaint.

Comment

Students did the right thing

I say the two girls did the right thing by reporting their teacher; certain topics are inappropriate for classroom discussion. In the US, teachers are not allowed to use their disproportionate power to promote their political beliefs in class, otherwise some students might be offended and this will invite lawsuits.

— Jeff Bass, foreign teacher from the US

Try other ways

There are many other more reasonable, more effective and more logical ways for the two female students to have expressed their dissenting views. At least I won't try to take political action by reporting to the authorities.

— Simon Zhang, local college student

Sympathy for the girls

There should be sympathy for the two students. The two girls are the sad outcome of the current examination-oriented education system. Students as young as these two cannot fully understand what counterrevolutionary means even while they use the phrase.

— Tom Lee, IT engineer

Expert view

This is bizarre. While "revolutionary," "counterrevolutionary" and "reactionary" were among the first English words in my vocabulary in the 1970s, they have rarely been used since 1978, when the country opted to forget slogans like, "Never forget class struggle."

Counterrevolution, once a top crime according to Chinese

criminal law, was abolished in 1997. Students from an elite law school such as the East China University of Political Science and Law are supposed to know more about this than the average Chinese.

Counterrevolutionary crimes, even under the old criminal law, referred to those whose aim was to overthrow the gov-

ernment. That surely had nothing to do with Yang's criticisms of government practices and Chinese culture.

By accusing their professor of being a counterrevolutionary, the two female students have done nothing but open up old wounds on crimes that once tore apart our nation. It is truly regrettable. But, what it

has profoundly revealed is the lack of academic freedom present on our campuses. Our students, taught under the same system since kindergarten, are not used to critical thinking and listening to opposing views, let alone enjoying and embracing them.

— Chen Weihua, China Daily senior commentator

Yuanmingyuan invites technological investments

By Zhang Dongya

An invitation to invest in Yuanmingyuan, or the Old Summer Palace, drew a lot of interest at the Promotion Conference on Tourism Industry Projects last Wednesday.

The Yuanmingyuan Management Office presented at the conference a 129-million-yuan project called "Yuanmingyuan Digital & Interactive Experience Center," which would construct inside the park circular and semi-circular viewing 4D screens, as well as four-dimensional screens showing high-definition images of the Old Summer Palace.

The "virtual Yuanmingyuan" project aims to present the history of the garden — from its construction, expansion and destruction — using digital imagery, simulation and multimedia platforms. Tourists who visit the planned digital center would see "first-hand" the huge changes the park has undergone.

The center will be built at Qichun Yuan, the best spot in Yuanmingyuan in the summer. Also, as many as 10 exhibit areas will be built at other key sites in the old palace, to show how they originally looked.

"It will not be a rough photo exhibition, but a restora-

tion of a virtual Yuanmingyuan using digital techniques, which is already an important way of displaying historical relics in developed countries," Chen Mingjie, director of the Yuanmingyuan Management Office said in an interview with the *Beijing Youth Daily*.

The project, estimated at 129 million yuan, would be cheaper than restoring the Old Summer Palace, Chen said.

Several investors at the conference wanted to know more about the project but were concerned about its profitability. Others were cautious about getting involved in cul-



A digital image of the old garden.

tural relics.

The cost of tickets to the center has already been decided: 20 yuan for the 120-degree screen; 25 yuan for the 360-degree screen; and 40

yuan for the 4D screen. The project is expected to recover its cost within five years, with a projected 20-percent increase in visitors each year after the center opens.

Comment

Moderate development only

Moderate development will be good for the protection of cultural relics. It will not only let more people know the sites, but also raise money for their maintenance. The precondition is that the development not become too commercialized.

— Dai Bin, vice president of the China Tourism Academy

Not a finger on Yuanming Yuan
In my opinion, the biggest value of Yuanming Yuan lies in its ruins, which bear witness to history — its destruction by British and French troops — and its sense of desolation,

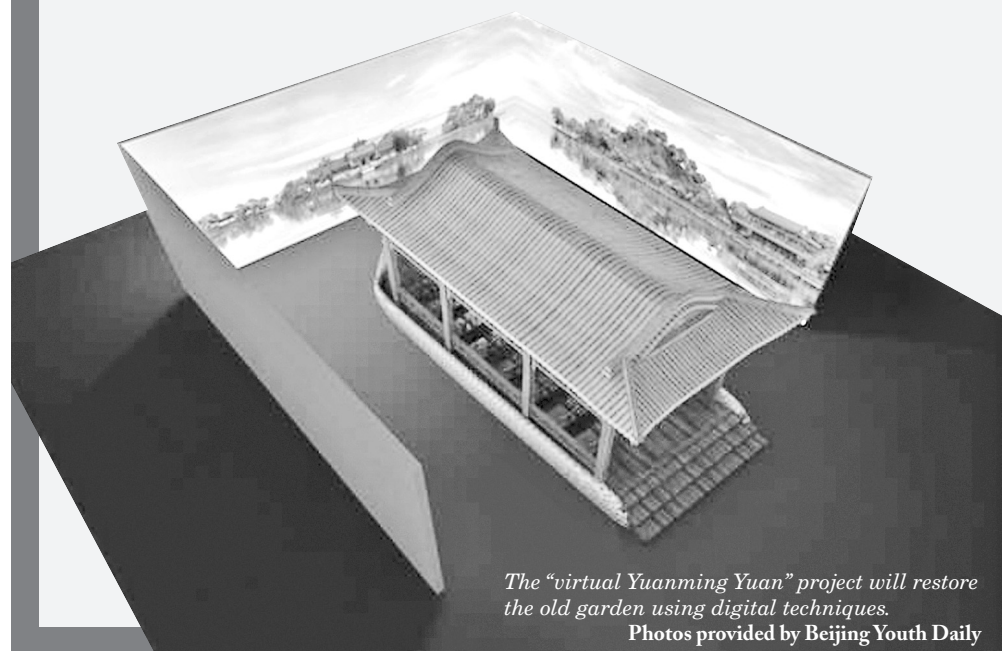
solemnity and changing of fortunes. So, any development in the name of commerce should be kept away from historical sites. The injection of technology will only spoil the historical atmosphere.

— Luo Jin, commenter at China Youth Daily

Money still an X-factor

I don't know who will pay 40 yuan to watch a 4D film inside a scenic area. Also, the 25-minute show will be too long for visitors in a hurry. So if organizers are not sure it will make money, be careful!

— Ken Wang, employee of Beijing Youth Travel Agency



The "virtual Yuanming Yuan" project will restore the old garden using digital techniques.

Photos provided by Beijing Youth Daily

The six-city tour of a yellow bicycle

By Jackie Zhang

What role do bicycles play in a city? In some cities, bicycles are popular modes of transport because of their affordability and convenience; in other cities, however, they are replaced with private cars. In the documentary *Tales of a Yellow Bike*, a yellow bicycle named Lady Klien tells the story of different bicycles in various cities throughout the world.

"Lady Klien is like a witness in the documentary," Tina Hahn, the director, said. "She went to six cities in five countries with her owner Maogosha Pyjor. I made the documentary as if the bicycle was telling what she saw during the trip."

Hahn's idea for the documentary came when Toronto closed its BikeShare program, a project run by the Community Bicycle Network (CBN), which promoted community cycling initiatives. Cycling, the group said, was a more convenient and environmentally-friendly way to get around the city.

CBN refurbished donated bicycles, rented out trailers and bikes at affordable rates and offered space to practice and learn bike mechanics and cycling skills. BikeShare, which was managed by Pyjor, painted all their bicycles yellow and gave them names. Due to financial difficulties, however, the program was closed in 2006.

Hahn decided to focus on the importance of bicycles as a major mode of transport. She began shooting in Toronto after BikeShare shut down in November 2006, and visited six other cities: Amsterdam, Beijing, New York City, Bogota and La Rochelle and Paris in France. After two years of filming and editing, the documentary was finished in October.

"Of the five countries we've been to, China has the largest number of bicycles with 470 million. Bikes used to be the only mode of transportation in the country," Hahn said.

The director was impressed by some of the locals she met during filming. "We interviewed Wang Yong, manager of the Beikel-

antu Bicycle Rental Company in Beijing. Wang tried to promote bicycle rental 15 years ago but failed. This year, he tried the same business again and succeeded," she said. "It is exciting to see his blue bikes moving along Beijing's streets."

Bogota is another favorite of Hahn's. "Bicycles have greatly changed the city. We saw the roads were wide, made especially for people riding bicycles. There are hundreds of kilometers of bike lanes."

During the filming, BikeShare manager Pyjor also searched for a model that could help CBN overcome challenges it faced in Toronto. "A bike-share program can only work in the downtown core," Hahn said, and that a lot of automobile drivers in Toronto don't respect cyclists. "If we got more bikes on the street it would be safer for cyclists because there would be changes in traffic and drivers would be slowing down more. I want people to consider bicycles as transportation, not just recreation," she said.



Tina Hahn



Lady Klien, the star of the documentary.

Photos provided by Tina Hahn

From missionary worker to drum and bass promoter



Dan Stephenson said he is lucky to do a job that he loves.

Photo by Lua

By Wang Yu

No one would guess Dan Stephenson, a well-known drum and bass music promoter in the city, is also a Mormon and worked as a missionary in London for two years. Stephenson, who is sociable and energetic, is always busy working on music events organized by his company, The Syndicate.

Filling the gap in Beijing

Stephenson first played drum and bass music as a disc jockey at Wudaokou's Lush club. He established his own company in 2004, and threw a party to mark the occasion.

"Not many people know this kind of music like they know hip hop, and I just thought they should have more options," Stephenson said.

The Syndicate is staffed by nine people, including Stephenson, but most work part-time. The group organizes drum and bass parties in clubs such as Baitu, Mix and Cargo almost every week.

It is the music, and not the money, that attaches Stephenson to his job as a promoter, he said. "I would say I work in the music industry rather than the night life circle."

He said it is not easy for a foreigner to work as a music promoter here, although the opportunities are widening. "I learned a lot from other promoters and always try to localize my approach," he said.

Some club DJs do not understand some musical genres, while some club owners dictate the night's playlist. "It is always the owners of the clubs, and not the DJs, who decide what music is to be played although they know nothing about music," Stephenson said.

London calling

Stephenson was born into a Mormon family in Utah, so it is not a surprise he followed a religious calling. Young Mormons, before they start college, can do missionary work outside the US, and Stephenson enthusiastically signed up in 1996.

"I was assigned to London which was also the place where my father had worked when he was young," Stephenson said. He was sent to Brixton, a community of mixed ethnicities in South London.

It was not easy being a missionary, especially for a young man who had stepped onto British soil for the first time. "Once,

me and my partner were surrounded by some punks and one of them pointed his knife at me. That is an experience that most missionaries have," he said.

The two years of mission work became his training ground for the realities of life. "It helped me to grow up and taught me how to deal with different kinds of people. The most important thing is, on the other side of the door, is always a story you can learn from," he said.

Work entwined with music

When he was in London, Stephenson tried to get involved in the local music scene although his work did not provide him with much money or opportunity.

"I was fascinated with drum and bass in England, but as a missionary, I didn't have much money to buy CDs," he said. "Once, a guy opened his door and was about to refuse me entry when I heard some drum and bass music playing in his house. I told him I liked the music a lot and he invited me to come in."

"There was another missionary who was a huge fan of AC/DC and the music also helped him out just like it did to me," Ste-

phenson said. Hard rock music like AC/DC has been described as "the devil's music" by some conservative religious groups.

After his first, short visit to Beijing in 2001, Stephenson continued his college education at Tsinghua University. In 2003, he got accepted into a prestigious law school in the US, but gave up the opportunity to become a lawyer. "Being a lawyer may be honorable, and will make my family proud, but my heart will wither without music," he said.

It will take effort for drum and bass to enter mainstream Chinese music, but Stephenson has already prepared himself for an uphill battle. "Some people who work in the music industry are eager for quick success and instant benefits. But I'm focused on introducing drum and bass to a wider audience," he said.

Stephenson admires the spirit of drum and bass for remaining true to its musical roots, and not allowing itself to be diluted by popular culture and the mass media. "Despite the difficulties, I love music and sometimes you have to create the scene you want to be a part of," he said.

Deafness Prevention Center opens at Tongren Hospital

By Venus Lee

The Center for Deafness Prevention set up by the World Health Organization (WHO) opened at the Tongren Hospital on Monday, the fifth such center worldwide established up by the UN health authority.

The center aims to carry out deaf prevention programs and information campaigns in the country's rural, impoverished and remote areas. People in rural areas do not give the disability the attention it deserves, and those found to be deaf cannot afford the expensive cost of treatment, said Han Demin, the center director.

"Early intervention is important in deafness prevention. If it is detected and treated early, it can reduce the burden to the patient's family," Han said.

Meanwhile, in order to reduce the incidence of diseases that result in deaf-muteness, WHO will train more deaf prevention workers nationwide and provide funds for them to conduct surveys.

According to Tongren Hospital, ages 0 to 7 are the crucial phase in a human being's language development, and hearing loss during this period will result in speech retardation or even deaf-muteness. Speech disability will also impact the



The opening ceremony of WHO's Center for Deafness Prevention at Tongren Hospital.

Photo Provided by Tongren Hospital

child's emotions, social development and other skills.

WHO chose Tongren Hospital to house its Center for Deafness Prevention because of the hospital's contribution to the country's deafness prevention and treatment program. Dr Shigeru Omi, WHO Regional Director for the Western Pacific, said at the center's launch that

Tongren's ear nose and throat treatment program is technologically advanced and that WHO is confident in its deafness control and prevention network.

Tongren is one of the first in the country to carry out deafness control and prevention work, with networks in Shandong, Inner Mongolia, and Jiangxi provinces that can examine the disability

48 hours after it is detected.

The country has a high incidence of hearing loss. The second nationwide sample survey of disabled person in 2006 revealed there were more than 20 million deaf people, accounting for 24 percent of the disabled population. Among the 20 million, 800,000 are under age 7, of which 30,000 were born deaf.

Sino-French emergency training center set up

By Han Manman

The Sino-French first aid training center opened at Beijing Anzhen Hospital last week to strengthen the capacity and teamwork of Beijing's emergency medical professionals.

The center, which was established by the Beijing Health Bureau, the French Embassy in China and Total oil and gas company, will provide the latest first aid training to the municipality's medical professionals, and support clinical research programs.

The center will offer a series of training courses beginning this week, including "emergency infectious diseases treatment" and "disaster medicine course," said Zhang Zhaoguang, president of Anzhen Hospital.

"Several medical experts from well-known Parisian hospitals will teach our doctors both the theory and practice of emergency medicine," he said, adding that local participants include nearly 300 doctors from emergency medical and relevant departments.

"This training center will allow us to borrow valuable experience from a developed country, and to build a high-caliber emergency medical team," Zhang said.

"This center, drawing on the long experience of the French, will focus on trauma, mass trauma, disaster medicine and so on. It aims to enhance team building and the training of medical and health professionals for emergency treatment," Jacques de Boisseson, representative general of Total in China, said.

Through a partnership with the Beijing Health Bureau, Total has invested €1.5 million (13 million yuan) to send 30 Chinese doctors to France for a one-year on-the-job training, Boisseson said.

Before the center was set up, the hospital had already carried out a Sino-French training program for emergency physicians for the Beijing Olympics. The program, which ran from March 31 to May 10, covered pre-hospital emergency training, in-hospital emergency training and disaster medicine lectures and drills, Zhang said.

The training center was set up based on a letter of intent (LOI) on specialized emergency medical care signed by the Beijing Health Bureau, the French Embassy in China and Anzhen Hospital last November.

Social entrepreneurship introduced

By Jackie Zhang

"Social entrepreneur" is a new phrase in China. Most people do not know what a social entrepreneur is or what he or she does — a knowledge gap that was filled last Thursday at the Social Innovation and the Third Sector Conference.

"A social entrepreneur works in an entrepreneurial manner, but primarily for social benefit. Driven by a social mission, he or she aims to address unmet needs to improve people's lives," Nick Temple, policy and communications director of the London-based School for Social Entrepreneurs (SSE), said.

SSE, established in 1997, addresses inequalities and social exclusion by supporting social entrepreneurs to translate their talent into tangible social outcomes. The school provides training, guidance, strategic help and mentoring

opportunities to people who are committed to work for society.

Temple said SSE does not look for specific qualifications in applicants to their programs, in which 80 to 100 new students are accepted each year. "If you are enthusiastic, determined and committed, you can come to the school," Temple said at the December 4 event, the concluding conference for the Social Innovation Program sponsored by the British Council and the State Administration for NGOs of China.

Hundreds of people have finished their one-year social entrepreneurship program at SSE and most of them have realized their dream of contributing to their community, Temple told his audience, a majority of whom worked for social organizations and NGOs from here and the UK.

"Roger Wilson-Hinds is one

of the most impressive persons I've ever met," Temple said. "He's visually impaired and ran a business for 10 years training blind and visually impaired people to use computers at work."


"There is screen-reading software for blind people in the UK, but it is quite expensive. In order to help poor blind people, Wilson-Hinds developed a low-cost screen-reading software."

Luljeta Nuzi is another inspiring story. She went to the UK as a refugee from Eastern Europe in 1999. She could not speak English and was frightened by everything around her. Motivated by her experience, she went to SSE wanting to set up a program for fellow refugees. Her Shpresa Program, started in 2001, is a community-led organization that works with the Albanian speaking commu-

nity, including refugees, asylum seekers and migrants from Albania, Kosovo, Macedonia and Montenegro. The program enables them to settle and fully participate in a new society, gain confidence and make progress in their lives.

"These people not only changed their careers, but have also successfully changed their lives," Temple said.

SSE has six member-schools in its UK network and will open its first international school in Australia in March. "The plan to establish a school in China is also in the works," Temple said. "I've discussed with Chinese social workers running an SSE school in China. We believe that a school here will work. Although many things are different in China from the UK, we can find ways to operate the school here," he said.



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French drama lovers donate box office for Chinese orphans

By Zhang Dongya

Every Wednesday evening, a group of French people head to a French kindergarten in Sanlitun for drama rehearsal. Young and old, from different walks of life, they have one thing in common: a love for drama and a heart for orphans.

They are amateur performers with the Theater of Lanterns, founded in September 2005 by drama lovers in the French community.

"When we named the troupe, we wanted something that would stand for Chinese culture to express our love of China," said Perrine Pautre, 26, one of the troupe's three original members.

"Lantern" also represented "hope for the poor children and orphans," Pautre said, referring to orphans in Western China who are recipients of the money the group makes through its performances.

"Our troupe's objective is twofold: to do drama and to support humanitarian work," Isy Chautemps, the troupe director, said.

"As for 2009, our goal is the same: to pass on as many donations as possible to the Madaifu Children's Association," Chautemps said, referring to a France-based

charity that helps orphans in Gansu, Shaanxi and Hubei provinces.

Since the troupe was established, as much as 328,000 yuan has been raised for the Madaifu Children's Association, founded in 1999. The financial aid has enabled 80 children every year to be fed and sent to school, as well as contributing to other work carried out by Madaifu.

The troupe has 10 members: seven women and three men. Evelyn Macera, 65, who joined the troupe when it was created three years ago, is the oldest member; the youngest is 16-year-old Tatiana Deodato, who has spent nearly all her time in school at the French School in Beijing.

Chautemps, 45, is the only professional in the troupe. She came to China in 2004, worked on several local TV dramas and joined the Theater of Lanterns this April. The members look up to her for training and encouragement.

The troupe gathered on Wednesday to rehearse their fourth play, *L'Atelier*, or *The Workshop*, by Jean-Claude Grumberg. It is set after World War II and talks about the aftermath of the Holocaust.

"It is a well-known play in France, and Grumberg is one of the rare con-



Theater members rehearse *L'Atelier*.

Photo provided by the Theater of Lanterns

temporary playwrights to be studied in school," Chautemps said. The group will stage it in May.

Since the members either have full-time jobs or are in school, finding time to rehearse every week is a challenge. When they finally get everyone together, they work late

into the night.

Over the past three years, the troupe has staged three dramas, one each year. All the plays were done in French, with Chinese subtitles. In 2006, they performed for an adaptation of *Le iner de cons*, or *The Dinner Game*, by Francis

Veber. It was a huge success, with an audience of 300.

In 2007, they presented *Theatre sans animaux*, or *Theater without Animals*. In May, they staged *Huit Femmes*, or *Eight Women*, at the Chaoyang Culture Theater, which was attended by 800 people.

Xmas party for pets and their people



Pets and their people at last Christmas at ICVS.

Photo provided by Mary Peng

By Annie Wei

The International Center for Veterinary Services (ICVS) will hold a Christmas party for pets and their people tomorrow, its annual gathering of pets, owners and pet lovers to celebrate the holiday season.

ICVS will take visitors on a tour of the hospital, introduce its staff and serve refreshments and holiday treats to pets and pet owners.

Mary Peng, manager of ICVS, said the party will welcome donations for the hospital's Community Cats Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) Program, a non-profit initiative to neuter and vaccinate stray cats in local communities.

TNR reduces the stray and feral cat population while helping these cats live longer, healthier lives, she said.

ICVS is a community center, as well as the only full-service animal hospital staffed by foreign veterinarians keeping to Western standards. Apart from providing pet care information and animal medical care, ICVS provides pet owners information on legally certified vaccinations, surgeries, dental work, lab tests and import/export guidelines.

When: December 13, 2-5 pm

Where: International Center for Veterinary Services, Kent Center, 29 Liangmaqiao Lu, Anjialou, Chaoyang District

Event

European Union Film Festival

China's first European Union Film Festival features screenings at the French Cultural Centre, the Instituto Cervantes, the Italian Institute of Culture and the Ullens Center for Contemporary Art. Each film will be screened in its original language with English and Chinese subtitles.

When: December 12-20

IAB Christmas Concert

The International Academy of Beijing (IAB) is throwing open its doors to families and friends across the city to celebrate the holiday season with an evening of music. IAB's choir will perform at the school auditorium.

When: December 12, 7-8pm

Where: 1 Yangshan Lu, Olympic Forest Park East (Northwest corner of Beiyuan Bridge, North Fifth Ring Road), Chaoyang District

Tel: 6430 1600 ext 31 (Look for Vickie Shum)

Walk: Changyucheng Village to Round Tower

The walk will take participants to a section of the Great Wall built during the Ming Dynasty. It will start at a village called Changyucheng, then follow a path up to the border of Beijing and Hebei Province. Attendees will walk past a small reservoir until they arrive at the remains of a tower, which was built for artillery in ancient times.

When: December 13

Tel: 8489 6319/20/21

Web site: chinawalking.net.cn

(By Wei Ying)

Vogue makes fashion icon

By Gan Tian

Vogue China, the 16th international edition of the world's most famous fashion magazine, hosted VOGUE ICONS 2008 in Beijing last Saturday.

Crowning the evening was the presence of Kate Moss, the most successful fashion model in history, and Hong Kong star Maggie Cheung.

Also celebrated were Chinese international supermodel Du Juan, top international fashion photographer Mario Sorrenti, Parisienne model, actress and fashionista Lou Doi-

llon, fashion designers Roland Mouret, Nina Ricci artistic director Olivier Theyskens, New York-based Phillip Lim, filmmaker Oliver Stone, top models Jessica Stam, Sasha Pivovarov, Hye Park, first Asian supermodel from the 1980s Filipina Anna Bayle and Asian stars Hidetoshi Nakata, Gigi Leung, Qi Qi, Pei Bei, Lv Yan, Olympic champions Lin Dan and Xie Xingfang and actress Gao Yuanyuan.

A performance by Fifth Element star, model, actress and singer Milla Jovovich, capped the evening.



Kate Moss



Phillip Lim



Maggie Cheung

Photo provided by Butterfly PR

189-prefixed cellphone numbers offered to public

By Jin Zhu

China Telecom will be selling 189-prefixed phone numbers in Beijing in the last 10 days of December. The application process for these new mobile phone numbers began Friday.

The public can apply for numbers that begin with 1891012 and 1891013 by calling China Telecom's hotline number 10000, or they can apply for 1891015 numbers on its Web site bj.ct10000.com.

Applicants need to show an identification card and provide their personal details. Foreigners need to present their passport. "A person can book one or two phone numbers," Zhang Dan, a China Telecom employee, said.

According to the announcement released by China Telecom, users can choose the last four digits of their number when they make an application. If the numbers are arranged in the patterns ABCD, ABAB, AAB, B, they are considered nice numbers and will be costlier to maintain.

For AA numbers, for example, the monthly bill for calls needs to be over 100 yuan. Besides that, users need to make a deposit of at least 1,200 yuan," Zhang said.

Users who have applied for phone numbers need to go through formalities at appointed China Telecom offices within seven days after receiving a notice, she added.

According to China Telecom, since the company has the license to run basic telecom services and value-added telecom services, subscribers of the new numbers will have access to high speed Internet services. On top of this, 189-prefixed numbers can be used to access online account numbers, such as those for email and chatting.

The cost of standard services in Beijing has not yet been announced, but based on exist-



China Telecom offers subscribers high speed Internet service.

CFP Photo

ing fees in Sichuan Province, users will not be charged for receiving local calls.

By eliminating monthly

rental charges, users' expenses will drop by close to 50 percent compared with the cost of Gotone services.

Discovery Channel and China Education TV seek fresh documentaries

By He Jianwei

Discovery Channel and China Education Television are launching a contest in search of documentaries that vividly capture the essence and spirit of China.

The contest, with the theme "Eye on China: Visionary Filmmakers Initiative," aims to identify outstanding filmmakers and emerging talents and provide them with the platform and funding to produce documentaries.

Documentarians are offered an opportunity to create films through personal stories to frame the extraordinary changes the country has gone through in

the last three decades. Since the open door policy was initiated in 1979, the country has astonished the world with its rapid development and transformation into a global powerhouse.

Filmmakers interested in joining the contest should submit a story outline, together with a production plan and budget, by 5 pm on February 6.

The outline for the half-hour documentary program should explore issues or events related to the theme. There is no predetermined format for the outline; any written layout, whether in essay form or a description of sequences

that convey a sense of the documentary, is acceptable. However, it should be no longer than three A4 pages and should be written in English or Mandarin.

Applicants may apply as an individual who will plan, write, direct and produce the program, or a writer or director who will employ a producer. They should include a showreel in a VHS, VCD or DVD of their previous work, or that of a key partner in the production.

Discovery Channel and Beijing Education TV will short-list up to 12 candidates and invite them to a workshop in Beijing at

the end of February. Organizers will then select five winners who will receive funding to produce their films. The selection process will favor stories and situations that can be filmed without too much travel and recorded within a maximum of 10 to 12 shooting days. Filming should fall within the broad shooting period of March to July 2009.

Applicants can send their story outline to the following address: Ketchum Beijing, 10/F, Tower A, Vantone Center, 6 Chaowai Dajie, Chaoyang District, or email address: discovery.eyechina@gmail.com.

ASK Beijing Today

Email your questions to: weiyang@ynet.com

Do visitors need to pay to enter Beijing University or Tsinghua University?

No. As long as the visitor registers at the gate, he or she can enter the campus.

I'll be in Beijing for Chinese New Year and am looking for shops that sell firecrackers. I haven't been able to find any, is that because they're not allowed?

Due to safety concerns, firecrackers for the Spring Festival, or the Chinese New Year, have not yet gone on sale. They will be on the market a few weeks before the holiday, and you will find them sold by street vendors.

What would be a good Christmas gift for a Chinese friend and his wife? Would a bottle of Jack Daniels, for example, be appropriate for the man?

Imported liquor is OK for the husband. Cosmetics or perfume will be appreciated by women of all ages. The sure way to find something uncommon is to go for those not labelled "made in China."

My friend just moved to an apartment in Dongzhimen. Is there a shop nearby, similar to Ikea, where she can get stuff for the kitchen?

There are no shops like Ikea in the Dongzhimen area, but there are vegetable markets on Chaoyangmen Nei Xiaojie, where vendors sell bowls and chopsticks. A pricier option is a furniture store called Illinois on the fourth floor of Kenzo Plaza, near the Dongzhimen Subway Station.

(By Wei Ying)

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Dramatic dream for small Chinese theater

By He Jianwei

"The future of Chinese drama will probably emerge from young theater festival," Yang Qianwu, secretary-general of the Beijing Dramatics' Association.

From November 4 to December 7, four dramas selected from the Edinburgh Fringe Festival and theater producers are looking to them for the future.

Before the performance, a small dispute erupted between the sponsor and the theater. "It Is Like It Ought To Be: A Pastoral" takes the audience on a journey to a more nostalgic, simpler and idealistic world, so the audience is not allowed to enter before the show is on. The sponsor insisted on his artistic ideal, but the theater refused his proposal because of the cold weather.

"I regret choosing this theater. The theater must take the artistic consideration when choosing a drama. They ignore the role of the theater, which is to be a bridge between the play and audience," Cui Yang, general manager of Beijing Milky Way Arts and Communications Company (MW), said. Cui's company brings Western ballet, dance, drama and music to China.

The Edinburgh Fringe Festival started in 1947 when eight theatre groups arrived uninvited at the first Edinburgh International Festival. The festival caters to all, from the biggest names in showbiz to street performers, and covers all sorts of art forms such as theater, comedy, children's shows, dance, physical theater, musicals and operas.

Two months ago, before the Edinburgh Fringe Festival's Beijing debut, the Beijing 2008 Youth Theater Festival celebrated a carnival of the country's youth theater. Styles varied from reproduction of theatrical classics to experimental drama and physical performance.

Like the Edinburgh Fringe Festival performances, the 11 youth theater plays were performed on a mini stage. "Unlike performing in a grand theater, where the stage is like a frame and the audience has to watch the story from afar, the relationship with the audience in a little theater is more intimate," Cui said.

"Each theater must understand its position. We must know what kind of drama is proper for our stage," said Fu Weibo, general manager of the Oriental Pioneer Theater of the National Theater Company.

Fu has worked hard to put the theater at the forefront of the country's small theater movement. Under his management, the Oriental Pioneer Theater has explored the boundaries of the stage. "I do not want to miss any talented young director. We choose any drama which is creative and experimental, as long as it is produced by young enthusiasts and groups," he said.

Fu said young people have ability to create good scripts, but "they have seen fewer first class dramas."

He said, however, that Chinese and Western drama exchange suffers from a great imbalance. "More and more top Western dramas are coming to China, but few Chinese dramas go abroad," he said.

To this end, Fu will take three or four Chinese theaters to Denmark for the 2009 Beijing International Drama Festival. "We hope Western audiences can see more than Chinese ballet, modern dance and

contemporary art," he said.

Cui said young directors are trying everything to please their audiences. "Why can the Edinburgh Fringe Festival host so many fantastic plays? Because the theater groups have no pressure from the ticket office. The ticket office has become a barrier to our innovation," he said.

In Britain, theater groups can easily raise funds. "The local and national government provide 40 percent of the operating costs," David Jubb, artistic director of Battersea Arts Center (BAC) in UK, said.

"The funds provide a strong base to develop new artists," Christina Elliot, a project manager from Fuel, said. Fuel is a UK-based organization that works with artists to develop, create and present new work for all ages, particularly in live performance.

In China, most theater groups are non-governmental and there is no governmental foundation for the development of young theater groups. Fundraising and business models for small-scale productions are key problems for development.

Although the Chinese government invests heavily in cultural industry, most funds go to support the grand theater. The fundraising for small theater is more difficult than the grand theater. Most producers ask their friends and relatives for a loan, or hawk their property.

Beijing director Meng Jinghui used his condo as collateral to borrow the money from his friend 10 years ago. He invested the 150,000 yuan into "Rhinceros in Love," which debuted in 1999 and still drew a large audience when it was performed again this year. After the success of the play, Meng reclaimed his condo.

Today, Meng has his own theater and supports young theater enthusiasts. Meng, together with Fu and Yang, initiated the first Beijing Youth Theater Festival in September.

"I think the festival represents the highest level of youth creation in Beijing. ... Overall, I think small theater in China has room to improve. There needs to be self-reflection. I hope the young directors will not give in easily to the market's commercial trends," he said.

The festival offered 40,000 yuan for each drama. "We set up the Youth Theater Foundation, which is like a basket. Next year, we will get more funds from the people who care about the future of young Chinese theater groups," he said.

Fu also said funding is the most important resource for theater groups. "Without the funding, the creators will have no desire to produce," he said.

However, the economic crisis is expected to make 2009 a tough year for theater groups. Yang said theater enthusiasts should test their work at next year's Youth Theater Festival. "If your play is successful, you can wait for two or three years to develop your own theater group," he said.

The Edinburgh Fringe Festival is a famous brand in theater. Its organizers said they hope the Beijing Youth Theater Festival can become the country's equivalent.

"Why can the Edinburgh Fringe Festival host so many fantastic plays? Because the theater groups have no pressure from the ticket office. The ticket office has become a barrier to our innovation."
— Cui Yang, general manager of Milky Way Arts and Communications Company

groups and enthusiasts. We hope the Beijing Youth Theater Festival next year will become China's Edinburgh Fringe
tion, said at a forum on British and Chinese drama and theater at the end of last month.
burgh Fringe Festival debuted in Beijing. Many small Chinese theater groups have emerged in the last two years,

*"I hope the young
directors will not give
in easily to the
market's commercial
trends."*

— Meng Jinghui, a
pioneer drama director



1857 White House



A Journey to the East

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ome a barrier to our innovation."
manager of Beijing Milky Way Arts and
Communications Company

*"More and more top Western dramas are coming to
China, but few Chinese dramas go abroad."*
— Fu Weibo, general manager of the Oriental Pioneer
Theater of the National Theater Company

e-Station

CFP Photos

The true Schindler

By Charles Zhu

The world will never forget the heroic acts of Oskar Schindler, whose rescue of thousands of Jews was depicted in the movie *Schindler's List*, directed by Steven Spielberg. Maybe you remember the closing scene, when a procession of elderly Jews who worked in Schindler's factory each set a stone on his grave in Jerusalem.

The gratitude can be traced back to that office, where the names, dates of birth and ID numbers were typewritten by the accountant Itzhak Stern. Every clack of the letters meant a life saved.

Mietek Pemper, a Polish Jew who was conscripted as secretary to Commandant Amon Goth of the Plaszow concentration camp, typewrote some pages of Schindler's list. His new *The Road to Rescue: the Untold Story of Schindler's List* (250pp, Other Press, US \$24.95) substantiates much of Spielberg's oversimplified telling. Pemper's work was translated into English by David Dollenmayer.

He said the list itself was not crucial, but "the multifarious acts of resistance that, like tiny stones being placed into a mosaic one by one, had made the whole process possible." He pointed out quite a few inaccuracies in the movie and corrected some others. He gave a detailed account of how numerous small initiatives played a role in the whole rescue effort. Of course, Oskar Schindler's humanism and courage played a major part. However, the final suc-

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cess was the culmination of the courageous acts of others.

Pemper, as Goth's personally secretary and interpreter, first saw telegrams from Auschwitz in the winter of 1940-1941 that reported, "Gradually, for us, Auschwitz became synonymous with death." He learned of the plan to exterminate Jews when his boss asked him to organize an SS correspondence. From the correspondence, he came to know that those Jews who could survive must have skills that the SS deemed useful, a point crucial to Schindler's rescue effort.

He learned from the SS letters that the Jewish inmates of the Plaszow camp would not be sent to Auschwitz to be exterminated if it could be proven that its weapons production was "essential for victory." Pemper inflated the production tables with the consent of Goth, a brute and a megalomaniac who set great store by authority and luxury. He had to cope with Goth, of whom all inmates were afraid.

"I would sit in the commandant's office and take dictation from him. While he talked, Goth would watch the mirror outside his window, which he used to oversee the area in front of the barracks. Suddenly he would stand up, take one of the rifles on the rack on the wall and open the window. I would hear a few shots and then nothing but screams. As if he had interrupted the dictation only to take a telephone call, Goth would come back to his desk and say, 'Where were we?'" Pemper said.

Based on the knowledge from the SS correspondence, Pemper informed Schindler that producing weapons in his factory would keep his workers safe. "If Schindler had not begun producing hand grenades in 1943, there would have been no Schindler's list and no rescue effort."

Salvation at last came in the person of Oskar Schindler, a young, hard-drinking womanizer who came to Krakow in search of a fortune. He was imperfect in real life, but was made a hero by circumstances.

Readers hungry for history beyond the textbook

By Zhang Dongya

"I may hate history, but I was enthralled by Dangnian Mingyue's version of it," Qianyang, a Douban.com user, said. Dangnian Mingyue, author of *Those Events of the Ming Dynasty*, published the final volume of his series, *Those Events of the Ming Dynasty VI* (331pp, China Customs Press, 28.80 yuan) last month.

The author, whose pen name means "Bright Moon of Years Past," posted a historical essay titled "those events of the Ming Dynasty" at Tianya and other Web sites in March 2006. His essay drew millions of readers, and he began serialized installments released every day.

After six months, the story was published as an unfinished novel. It was the first time an online work went to publication so quickly.

"What attracts me most is his unique way of telling the stories of history," Survive, a reader from Shanghai, said. "I never thought history could be written like this – so vividly and intriguingly."

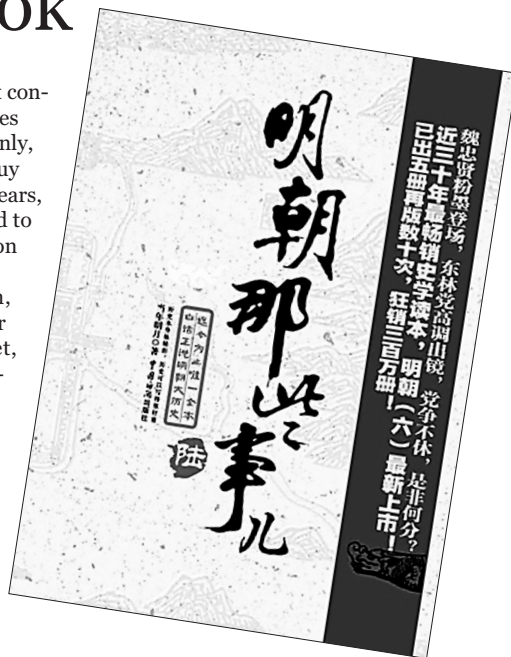
The author describes events in the Ming Dynasty spanning 1344 to 1644 from a common man's viewpoint and normal language. "History itself is splendid, and can be told splendidly," the author wrote on the cover.

Online fans were not content with the serial stories appearing on the Web only, and many went out to buy the books. Within two years, several publishers talked to the author for publication deals. His final volume went to Dangdang.com, the biggest book dealer on the domestic market, who won exclusive distribution rights and sold 250,000 volumes in a month.

Though scholars and experts insist that history is best left to their own droll, "uncorrupted" rambles, Dangnian Mingyue's books still sold like crazy and are talked about in popular discussion the way professors' books are not.

Sociologists said the enthusiasm for grass-roots literature and history in the vernacular is on the rise, and *Those Events of the Ming Dynasty* is only one part of a greater trend.

The *Beijing News's* book page editor said the books are most notable for Dangnian Mingyue's writing style and for sparking renewed inter-



est in history. Many readers move on to other Ming Dynasty-related books by Zhang Juzheng or Qi Jiguang after finishing Mingyue's.

For other fans, the series highlights specific persons who are usually lost in the long river of history. The books work as an important supplement to textbooks and traditional historical readings.

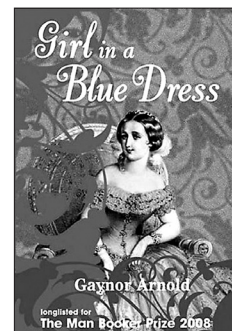
Bookworm book listing

Jenny Niven from the Bookworm recommends the following new arrivals to *Beijing Today* readers.

Girl in a Blue Dress

By Gaynor Arnold, 512pp, Tindal Street, 160 yuan

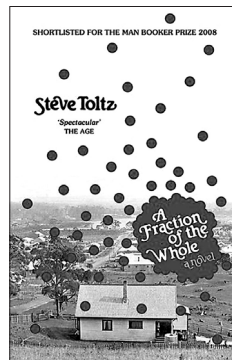
This is a retelling of the lives of Charles and Catherine Dickens. Dorothea, the narrator and heroine of the novel, proves herself to be more than the doting Victorian wife of a restless genius who resembles Dickens, despite being called Alfred Gibson. Gibson's funeral has taken place at Westminster Abbey, and his wife of 20 years, Dorothea, has not been invited. The Great Man favors his children and a clandestine mistress over his estranged wife. Dorothea revisits their early courtship before the birth of too many children snapped her vitality and discovers the devious nature and hypnotic power of this celebrity author.



A Fraction of the Whole (Hardcover)

By Steve Toltz, 720pp, Hamish Hamilton, 285 yuan

Martin Dean spent his entire life analyzing everything – from the benefits of suicide to the virtues of strip clubs – and passing on his self-taught knowledge to his son, Jasper. But now that his father is dead, Jasper can reflect on the man who raised him in intellectual captivity, and the irony is this: theirs was a great adventure. As he recollects the extraordinary events that led to his father's demise, Jasper recounts a boyhood of outrageous schemes and shocking discoveries – about his infamous criminal uncle, his mysteriously absent mother, and Martin's constant battle to leave his mark on the world.



Hot, Flat and Crowded

By Thomas L. Friedman, 448pp, Penguin, 300 yuan

The World is Flat helped millions of readers see globalization in a new way. Now Friedman brings a fresh outlook to the crises of destabilizing climate change and rising competition for energy – both of which could poison our world if we do not act quickly and collectively. His argument speaks to all of us who are concerned about the state of America in the global future. Friedman proposes that an ambitious national strategy – which he calls "Geo-Greenism" – is not only what we need to save the planet from overheating; it is what America needs to make itself healthier, richer, more innovative, more productive and more secure.



(By Zhang Dongya)

Designing for the next majority

By He Jianwei

It is time to design for more than young, able-bodied consumers. According to statistics, within 12 years half the adult population the world over will be over age 50. Disabled and old people will no longer be special cases, but a bulk of the mainstream. Designers are considering a more socially inclusive approach to ensure their products meet the needs of the coming majority.



A plastic shell used to cover and protect the toes when trimming nails.



Tang Wai-man and Tang Wai-chi

A design competition to promote Inclusive Design this August brought together six teams of designers from the Chinese mainland, Hong Kong, Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore and South Korea to design for disabled people.

"Inclusive design is not a new realm, nor even a separate specialization. It is a general approach and business strategy that seeks to ensure mainstream products, services and environments are accessible to the largest number of people," said Roger Coleman, an Inclusive Design professor and co-director of the Helen Hamlyn Center at the Royal College of Art in London.

The competition challenged designers to find a solution to usability within 48 hours. It promoted Inclusive Design as a tool to help inspiring designers to think outside the box and into the disabled community.

"Design solutions should be able to serve a large and diverse spectrum of the community and extend to a larger group of consumers," Julia Cassim, a researcher in Royal College of Art, said.

The product or design solution will span all design disciplines from product design, interaction design, 3D design, environments, services and visual communications.

"The challenge provides an unparalleled opportunity for designers to work outside their usual comfort zones, to look at a problem from the very different perspective of the disabled consumer," said Doris Fong, head of Arts and Creative Industries of the British Council in Hong Kong. "For the disabled community, it is a chance to be full participants in the design process," Fong said.

China now has 83 million disabled persons, and is expected to have 174 million people over age 60 within two years.

One team of young designers from Guangzhou and Hong Kong presented a new computer interface, which was recognized by the judges as having the greatest market potential of all contest submissions.

The team was inspired by its time with Tang Wai-man and Tang Wai-chi to create two new computer interface devices. The Tang brothers both have Mucopolysaccharidoses (MPS), a condition that affects the whole body.



Tang Wai-man and Tang Wai-chi inspire the designers to create computer interface devices.



The brothers are more than 40 years old, but few people with MPS live past 20. The illness is a group of seven rare inherited metabolic diseases, which together cause a deficiency of specific enzymes needed to break down mucopolysaccharides. This can lead to organ damage.

Many everyday tasks are made difficult by MPS, from buttoning a shirt to getting money from a wallet. Using the computer is something both Chi and Man enjoy, and they spend much time in front of a terminal. However, operating the mouse is a challenge. Their hands have large fingers and reduced flexibility.

Using the mouse is an awkward, two-handed task for Chi, the elder brother, and a tricky one-handed one for Man. "Our first solution was simply to arrange the mouse differently – in an upright orientation allowing an easier grip and a more relaxed hand. The bigger product breakthrough

came from the team's realization that although limited in dexterity, both brothers could use chopsticks skillfully," Wu Fan, one of the members in the design team, said.

"We applied those motions to computer input and the MPowerStyx – the chopstick mouse – was born. All functions are achieved with the same skills learned through years of eating. Chi and Man both agreed that the Upright Mouse and MPowerStyx were great advances," he said.

Another team worked with paraplegic wheelchair users who found it difficult to cut their own toenails. The group designed a plastic shell to cover and protect the toes when cutting nails.

The user places the protective cover over their finger or toe. Its edge sits neatly under the nail to act as a trimming guide and protect the skin below. A stretchy, snug fit ensures the guard will not move during snipping.



Photos provided by British Council

Shopping from the warmth of home

By Li Jing

Online shopping is a woman's secret weapon in the current subzero temperatures. Competitive prices and door-to-door delivery make online shops doubly attractive. Aside from Taobao, other sites are seeing a boom in business this winter.



Cosmetics

Sasa.com

Sasa is nothing new to frequent visitors of Hong Kong, and is a must for cosmetics fans. The price of its products online is similar to that in their Hong Kong stores. The site has good quality products, with some popular brands priced cheaper than in other shops. For the holiday season, the site will offer gift packages at even bigger discounts.

Tips:

Orders can be paid by credit card or through Alipay.com. The delivery, however, is not so speedy and takes at least five days. Customers are advised to check the products' expiration date first before making a payment.

Others:

Dhc.net.cn: DHC's online shop

Guopi.com: Sells a wide variety of cosmetics



Clothes

Lamium.com

Owned by Unlimited Brand, La Miu has already found a huge following among female netizens though it has not set up a store in the capital. Pretty designs and high quality products, not to mention its customer service, have played key roles in its success. If customers end up ordering the wrong size of clothing, La Miu allows exchanges – fast and for free.

Delivery takes two to four days.

Tips:

Orders can be paid through Alipay.com or by cash to the courier delivering the goods. Purchases over 200 yuan enjoy free shipping.

Others:

Giordano.com.cn: Giordano's online store gives customers more choices and lower prices compared to its stores.

Shishangqiye.com: Sells South Korean clothes



Digital product

360buy.com

This is a well-known digital product store that sells at competitive prices. It also provides after-sale services. Delivery takes three days.

Tips:

Customers are advised to pay only after they have received the product.

Others:

Soit.com.cn: Sells a variety of brand name products



Pet shops

Momoyoyo.com

This is a total pet store, offering pet food, vitamins and grooming products. Though the prices here are not as low as those on Taobao, the quality is reliable and it is often cited in pet forums.

Others:

176pet.com: Sells first-aid products for pets. It also provides answers to any question regarding pets.

Petglobal.net: Provides instructions on pet training and medical care. It also has a forum in which owners can post pictures of their pets, to help it find Ms or Mr Right.



Snacks

Naccoo.com

The Web site sells snacks imported from Japan, South Korea and Europe. The products are offered at a reasonable price.

Tips:

It provides sample products, so customers can try out a snack first before making a purchase.

Others:

Laiyifen.com: Specializes in Chinese snacks like melon seeds and glazed fruit.

Merry Christmas

Song and dance feast+Gifts+pleasantly surprised

Christmas has been quietly approaching footsteps, Beijing Empark Grand Hotel have pleasure and Merry Christmas to you! You are welcome to come and join us in our wonderful moment.

"Variety show", "Children's party", Two party tickets on sale ...

Tel: 8610-88598888-2988, 2989
Ticket Time: Nov 29, 2008 - Dec 24, 2008 09:00-21:00

69 Banjing road, Haidian district, Beijing China 100097

December desserts

By Gan Tian

With Christmas just around the corner – a holiday synonymous with pies, cakes and chocolates – diners should remember to leave room for after-meal sweets. *Beijing Today* knows which desserts you cannot afford to miss this season!

Edible Christmas trees, bells, and reindeer

By Li Jing

These eye-catching desserts were created by five-star hotel award-winning pastry chef Wu Di. Shaped like Christmas trees, bells, angels and reindeer, these confections are so adorable it is difficult to take the first bite. Other offerings include cookies, log cakes, sweet breads, traditional Nuremberg specialties, as well as Gingerbread house goodies.

China World Trade Center

Where: Gourmet Corner, West Wing, China World Trade Center, 1 Jianguomen Wai Dajie, Chaoyang District

Tel: 6505 2266 ext 43



Photo provided by China World Trade Center

Christmas pudding

The First Lounge Bar at Park Plaza Beijing Wangfujing Hotel has prepared a Christmas pudding with honey-top cake and cranberries. It comes in two sizes: 50 yuan for the medium-sized and 70 yuan for the large one.

The First Lounge Bar

Where: Park Plaza Beijing Wangfujing, 97 Jinbao Jie, Dongcheng District

Open: 10 am – 10 pm

Tel: 8522 1999 ext 3621

Photo provided by the First Lounge Bar



Provided by Club Camp

Jiangchuan silver snow fish

Never heard of fish for dessert? Well, now you have. Camp Club's Jiangchuan Silver Snow Fish is cooked in coconut milk, curry and milk. With its smooth and light taste, it is recommended as the dish to wrap up a heavy meal.

Camp Club

Where: F6, Building 8, Gongti Xi Lu, Chaoyang District

Open: 11:30 am – 2 pm for lunch, 2-5 pm for tea, 6:30-11 pm for dinner, 11 pm – 3 am for late night drinks

Tel: 6552 49452



Photo provided by My Humble House

Macadamia nuts chocolate

My Humble House's six-course Christmas set meal ends with an ice cream dessert. But on Christmas Eve – and only on that day, the restaurant will serve Macadamia nut-chocolate with vanilla ice cream to diners who make a special request.

The dessert pairs a ball of vanilla ice cream with chocolate-flavored ice shavings. The dark brown ice shavings are sprinkled with milk powder, while the white ice cream is topped with nuts. Mint leaves, cranberries and yellow candy sticks give the dessert a festive air.

The set meal costs 600 yuan per person, including the dessert, and is subject to a 10-percent service charge.

My Humble House Oriental Plaza

Where: Platform, W3, Oriental Plaza, 1 Dong Chang'an Jie, Dongcheng District

Tel: 8518 8811

My Humble House China Central Place

Where: F2, Building 19, China Central Place, 89 Jianguo Lu, Chaoyang District

Open: 10:30 am – 2:30 pm, 5:30-10:29pm

Tel: 6530 7770

Silent Night chocolate mousse cake

"Silent Night" is a dessert for the health-conscious, created by the popular online cake company 21Cake. The bottom layer is made of wheat, with a 12-millimeter sprinkling of pine nuts, cassia and chocolate. It contains a dash of gin to give it a "naughty" edge.

21Cake does not have a shop in town, so you can only order Silent Night online or by phone. The cake comes in different sizes to, so customers can party without worrying there will not be enough to go around!

21Cake

Web site: 21Cake.com

Tel: 6571 2266

Price: 168 yuan for 1 pound (4-5 persons), 198 yuan for 1.5 pounds (6-7 persons), 260 yuan for 2 pounds (7-8 persons), 390 yuan for 3 pounds (11-12 persons) and 650 yuan for 5 pounds (15-20 persons).



Photo provided by 21Cake

Dance to illuminate the human spirit

By He Jianwei

Recognized as a "seminal influence on dance/theater," Jennifer Muller is known for her expressive dance movements, unusual stage design and radical incorporation of dialogue into dance performances.

Beijingers will see two of her works — "Human and Nature" and "Passion and Promise" — performed by her company Jennifer Muller/The Works at the 6th Beijing International Theater and Dance Festival this weekend. The program will showcase six dances, and the world premiere of Aria, the experimentations of a new generation of modern dancers in the US.

"Aria," which was created this year, is made up of a series of arias, duets and trios remi-

niscant of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's operas. Each section is unique in its treatment of and response to the music.

Muller's dances have been characterized as "a series of explosions of life" with a "joyous, almost spiritual quality" and for portraying a "blazing theatricality" and a "splendid, disciplined technique," Ou Jianping, a dance critic said.

A playwright as well as a choreographer, Muller found her passion and creative voice in dance. Born in 1944, she began creating choreography at age 7 and started dancing professionally at 15 as a member of the Pearl Lang Dance Company.

In 1976, she established Jennifer Muller/The Works, which has applied a multi-disciplinary approach to

dance, weaving it with theater and visual art.

The company has toured 38 countries and 30 US states. It has premiered over 90 pieces and collaborated with a variety of artists such as Yoko Ono, Keith Haring and Keith Jarrett. Alumni that have founded dance companies include Ronald K. Brown, Young Soon Kim, Pascal Rekoert, Michael Jahoda and Maria Naidu.

The Works is also involved in professional training, arts awareness and mentoring programs, which reaches out to emerging

choreographers and thousands of young people in New York City every year.

Where: National Center for Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: December 13-14, 7:30 pm

Admission: 500 yuan for VIP, 400, 300, 200 and 100 yuan

Tel: 6655 0000

Upcoming

Nightlife

Dear J

For the first in the series of Silver Screen parties at the Ullens Center for Contemporary Art, Dear J presents his third opus "Psychodelic Elephant," which explores the depths of heart with heavy doses of bass.

Where: Ullens Center for Contemporary Art, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: December 18, 9:30 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 8459 9269

Friday, December 12

Exhibition

A Different Take

Where: Red Gate Gallery, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until January 31, daily except Monday 11 am - 6 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 6438 1005

On the Track of Dreams -

Zulfa Hendra Solo Exhibition

Where: Top Red, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 10 am - 6 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 8459 9633

Rock Color - Group Exhibition

This is a group exhibition that is centered on the various colors of rocks.

Where: 94 Space, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until January 10, daily except Monday noon - 5:30 pm; weekends 10 am - 6 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 8456 0467

Seeking in World of Color - Wu Zhanchun Solo Exhibition

Wu's works have been added to the collection of the US's Ford Foundation, the Embassy of Denmark, the Embassy of Luxembourg, the Goethe Institut.

Where: Beijing Wan Fung Art Gallery (Guanyintang Exhibition Hall), 32 Guanyintang, Wangsiying 2A, Chaoyang District

When: 10 am - 5 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 6523 3320

Nightlife

Franck Segar Trio

The group performs bop music with acoustic renditions of Latin classics,

as well as new arrangements of modern and folk Chinese songs.

Where: La Baie des Anges, 5 Nanguangfang Hutong, Houhai, Xicheng District

When: 10 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 6657 1605

Flyaway Mirage Band Show

Where: New Get Lucky Bar (Haoyun), A1 Xingba Lu, Nuren Jie, Chaoyang District

When: 9 pm

Admission: 40 yuan

Tel: 8448 3335

Saturday, December 13

Exhibition

Chinese Freedom - Shi Jinsong Solo Exhibition

Where: T Space, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until February 15, daily except Monday 10:30 am - 6 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 8456 1529

My Own Way - Group Exhibition

An exhibit that features the works of young artists chosen by the center.

Where: SZ Art Center, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until March 1, daily except Monday 10 am - 6 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 6435 9719

Movie

Cape No. 7

Cape No.7 is a Taiwanese romantic comedy that won its director and leading actress this year's Golden Horse Award.

Where: 43C, Beijing Keven Aviation Instrument, 43 Beisanhuan Xi Lu, Haidian District

When: 2-5 pm

Admission: 10 yuan

Tel: 8211 5288

Sunday, December 14

Exhibition

Demolition Milk - Group Exhibition

Where: TS1 Gallery, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu,

Chaoyang District

When: Until December 21, daily except Monday 10 am - 6 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 6433 1588



Among Others - Budi Kustarto Solo Exhibition

In the Indonesian artist's works, the representation of the human body is seen as a search for meaning among entities that are

not always connected to each other.

Where: Soka Art Center, B103 Sky & Sea Business Plaza, 107 Dongsi Bei Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: Until January 18, daily 10 am - 9 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 8401 2377, 8401

5810

Movie

King of London

An outstanding work presented by the UK's National Film and Television School.

Where: Space For Imagination, 5 Xiwang-

zhuang Xiaoqu, Shuangqing Lu (East Gate of Qinghua University), Haidian District

When: 3 pm

Admission: 20 yuan

Tel: 6279 1280

Nuits d'Arabie

This made-in-Luxembourg movie is one of the nominees for the 2009 Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film.

Where: Ullens Center for Contemporary Art, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 4 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 8459 9269

Stage in January

Concert

Radetsky March

Who: China Film Symphony Orchestra
Where: Beijing Concert Hall, 1 Bei Xinhua Jie, Xicheng District
When: January 1, 7:30 pm
Admission: 100-1,280 yuan
Tel: 6605 7006

Butterfly Lovers and the Yellow River

Who: Chai Liang, Tan Xiaotang and the China Film Symphony Orchestra
Where: Beijing Concert Hall, 1 Bei Xinhua Jie, Xicheng District
When: January 2, 7:30 pm
Admission: 100-1,280 yuan
Tel: 6605 7006

Spirited Away

Who: Hayao Miyazaki and Joe Hisaishi

Where: Beijing Concert Hall, 1 Bei Xinhua Jie, Xicheng District
When: January 3, 7:30 pm
Admission: 100-880 yuan
Tel: 6605 7006

Lang Lang New Year Piano Recital

Who: Lang Lang
Where: National Indoor Stadium (inside the Olympic Park), Beichen Dong Lu, Chaoyang District
When: January 3, 7:30 pm
Admission: 190-2,009 yuan
Tel: 6417 0058

New Year Orchestral Concert

Who: Conducted by Earnest Martinez-Izquierdo
Where: Poly Theater, 14 Dongzhimen Nan Dajie, Chaoyang District
When: January 3, 7:30 pm
Admission: 80-1,080 yuan
Tel: 6501 1854

Concert of Traditional Chinese Music Classics

Who: Orchestral Music Group of the China Opera and Dance-Drama Theater

Where: Beijing Concert Hall, 1 Bei Xinhua Jie, Xicheng District
When: January 18, 7:30 pm
Admission: 80-880 yuan
Tel: 6605 7006

Dance

Swan Lake

Who: Hong Kong Ballet
Where: National Grand Theater Opera Hall (west side of the Great Hall of the People), Xicheng District
When: January 1, 7:30 pm
Admission: 180-1,280 yuan
Tel: 6655 0000

Beauty and the Beast

Who: Birmingham Royal Ballet
Where: National Grand Theater Opera Hall (west side of the Great Hall of the People), Xicheng District
When: January 13-15, 7:30 pm
Admission: 180-1,080 yuan
Tel: 6655 0000

Romeo and Juliet

Who: Birmingham Royal Ballet
Where: National Grand Theater Opera Hall (west side of the Great Hall of the People), Xicheng District
When: January 17-18, 7:30 pm
Admission: 180-1,080 yuan
Tel: 6655 0000

Cinderella

Who: Israel Ballet
Where: National Grand Theater Opera Hall (west side of the Great Hall of the People), Xicheng District
When: January 28-29, 7:30 pm
Admission: 180-880 yuan
Tel: 6655 0000

Drama

Journey to the West

Who: Guangzhou Acrobatic Troupe, China Oriental Song and Dance Troupe, Songshan Shaolin Martial Arts Troupe and Guangdong Dance School
Where: Beijing Exhibition Theater, 135 Xizhimen Wai Dajie, Xicheng District
When: January 14-31, 7:30 pm
Admission: 100-880 yuan
Tel: 6835 4455

(By Li Jing)

Dance to illuminate the human spirit

Photo provided by
National Center for Performing Arts



Not everyone fit for morning exercise

By Han Manman

Many people wake up ready to exercise first thing. For ages, it has been hailed as the key to health and fresh air. However, doctors have recently pointed out that not everyone is fit for morning exercise.

Morning troubles

1. The body's internal clock regulates it so that core and muscle temperatures are at their lowest early in the morning.

2. Blood pressure peaks in the early morning, constricting the arteries.

3. Heart attacks happen more often in the morning than in the evening, and exercise causes a slight, short-lasting spike in heart attack risk. It could also cause heart disease-related chest pain, strokes, heart

rhythm abnormalities, sudden cardiac death and deaths associated with congestive heart failure during morning hours.

4. Saliva, which protects people from viruses, flows at a reduced rate.

5. The air quality in the morning is worse than in afternoon or evening. Carbon dioxide and sulfur dioxide levels in the morning air are higher than in afternoon or evening.

"Morning exercise is especially dangerous for old people with hypertension or cardiovascular risk factors," Ma Mingliang, doctor of Beijing Guoyitang Chinese Medicine Hospital, said.

Optimal time

"As dawn approaches, your heart begins to work harder, pumping a few extra beats per

minute. Your whole cardiovascular system has to adjust as you stand for the first time. Vessels contract to help overcome gravity's pull and ensure an ample supply of blood to the brain so you can take your first few steps without stumbling," Ma said.

If the early hours are not the best time to exercise, when is?

Studies have found that exercise later in the day yields better performance and more power. Muscles are warm and more flexible, perceived exertion is low, reaction is quicker, strength is at its peak and the resting heart rate and blood pressure are low.

Establish a routine

"I have exercised in the morning for five years. Starting my day with movement recharges me for the new day. I don't think there is

anything wrong with my health," Li Chunhui, a morning exercise advocate, said.

Ma said people without health problems can certainly benefit from morning exercise: any time is better than never.

Regular exercisers will find their best time on their own, Ma said. "Don't change your schedule if you feel good beginning your day with exercise," he said.

On the other hand, if exercise time varies from day to day, it may be wearing you out rather than pumping you up, Ma said.

It's important to establish a routine geared to your one's own physique and living habits. Some runners prefer to run early in the morning, and some set out before daybreak, Ma said.

Dieting? Don't forget your stomach

By Zheng Lu

When people start a diet, how much to eat becomes a problem at every meal. Some strong-willed people who are not familiar with dieting will relegate themselves to a few scraps.

Li Xian, who works as a secretary at a foreign company lives such a life. She exercises frequently and lives on a breakfast of crackers and fruit for lunch and dinner. A month later, she was diagnosed as hypoglycemic after having fainted several times.

Many endure frustration, hunger and confusion on their quest to slim down, but eventually return to overindulgence. But *Beijing Today* has a few suggestions that could make the next diet a success.

Feeling hungry

Let your stomach lead you in your diet. Try to avoid eating anything for about four hours. "The stomach will work for four to six hours after a meal as it breaks down food," Hu Xuming, a nutritionist from the China Nutrition Union, said. During that period, your stomach will digest better if you do not give it any added burden. By spacing out your meals, it allows hunger to develop naturally. It is important especially for dieters whose meal times are irregular.

Diet diligently

If you eat every day at the same time, within a few days your body will begin to expect food at that time. Eat the same types of foods, like rice, noodles or oatmeal, to work out the proper amount for your stomach.

Taste the first few bites of any meal carefully. People gauge the test of a food through its first few bites, and when they are finished, the flavor lingers on. Slow down and eat smaller bites each time, and wait for the stomach to signal when it is full.

"It is better to finish a meal over 20 to 30 minutes," nutritionist Hu said. Eating too slow can overload the stomach and eating too quickly impairs digestion. She said that during a meal you should ignore everything else and focus on the food. No newspaper, no TV and no intense discussion: these can all lead to over-eating. That does not mean you need to be a dull dinner mate-relax and



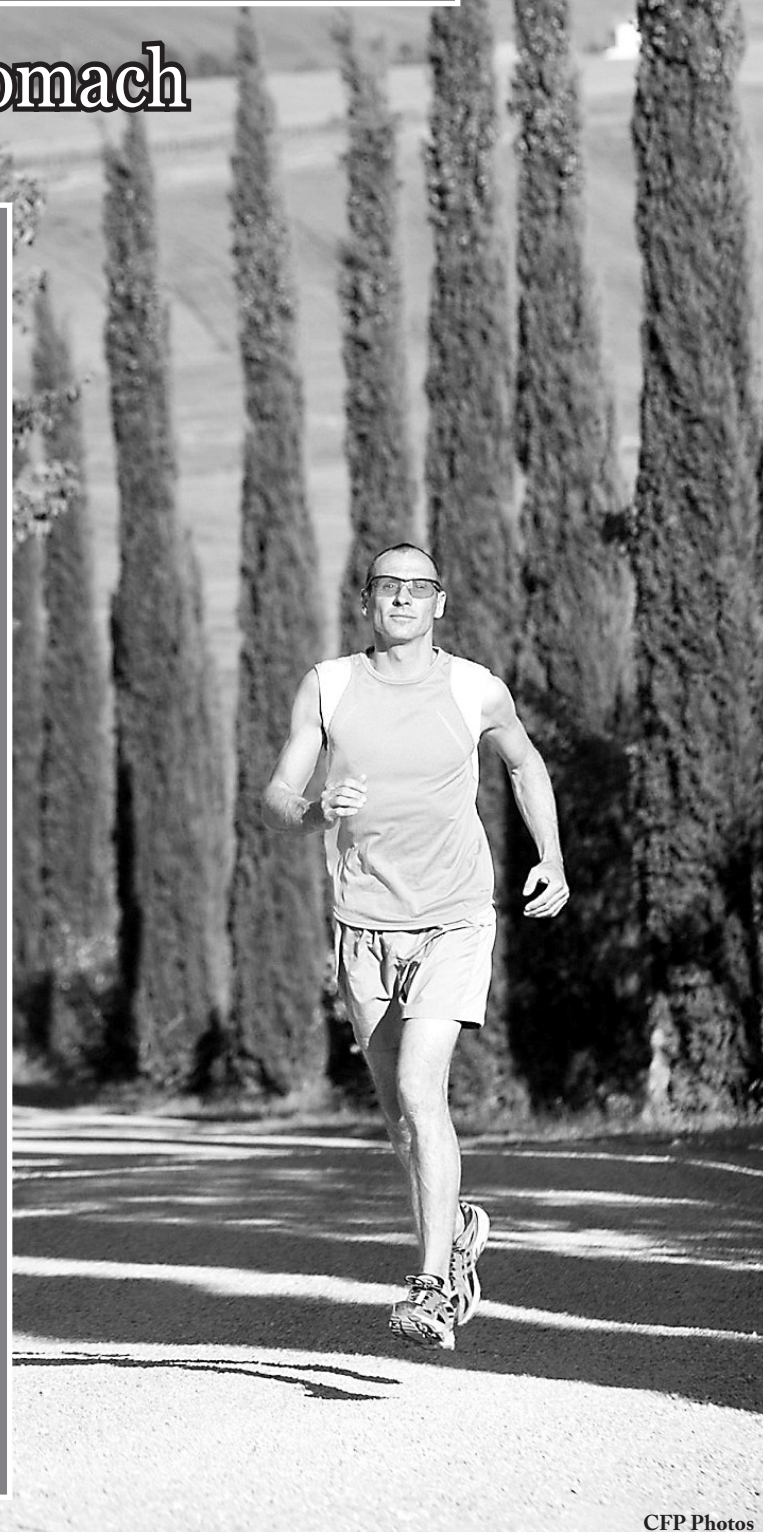
talk, but then pick up your spoon and continue to eat.

Recognize your needs

Sometimes people eat not out of the hunger, but out of boredom. "Some people eat when they are happy. Others eat when they feel angry or depressed," Hu said. In fact, impulsive eating can be a sign of an emotional disorder. Hu said people often turn to food for help, for comfort. The appetite can be driven by emotions, both positive and negative. "Choose other ways to vent such as shopping and exercising," Hu said.

Even if you cannot control yourself and wolf down more than a normal portion, do not feel guilty unless you make a habit of it. However, if you must gorge, try to include foods rich in fiber which can help to digest less-healthy foods.

Try these suggestions for 10 days to see if there is a change in your diet and mood. You are the owner of your stomach and your soul, so be true to your own needs. Concentrate on how you feel, no matter what happens.



CFP Photos

Military 'cities' along Beijing's north border



Yanhecheng City

The four villages are regarded as "cities" because all were fortresses. Armies were permanently stationed there in case enemies came and attacked the city. All four are near the Great Wall, which was built as the country's major line of defense against enemies.

Yanhecheng, built in the Ming Dynasty, is in a valley beside the Yongdinghe River. Its geographic location was key to warding off Mongolian attackers and gave rise to its name Yanhe, which means "along the river."

The city has two gates: one in the east and another in the west. The eastern gate, Wan'an, has been torn down, but the western gate, Yongsheng, still stands. The city walls are made of stone, but most of them are in ruin. The village has a monument, words etched on it, telling the story of how Yanhecheng was built in 1578.

There are 15 fortresses within the village, running 40 kilometers along the mountain. The fortresses are two-storied, each is marked with a number. Although the fortresses are not connected by walls, people on one fortress can hear the voices of those on another. It is strange, but there is one unnumbered fortress, which looks exactly like the rest. This fortress attracts more visitors than the others.

There are many structures in the village built in the architectural style of the Ming and Qing dynasties. It only has one big street, which bisects the village. The rest are narrow lanes.

"The city looks like an old statue. There are no more wars here. Villagers live a peaceful and simple life," Zhao said. "The city has few visitors for many people don't know about it. But painters, photographers like to paint and take photos here. Some hikers often head off from here towards Huangcaoliang, a popular site in the Beijing scene."

The villagers cook food in big stoves and have a unique way of preparing



The remains of the city wall



The Yongsheng gate is the only gate left in Yanhecheng.

steamed rice. First, the rice is boiled, then it is allowed to stew over charcoal fire. Dishes are first stir-fried then braised. Villagers have a communal vegetable garden, which is their major source of food.

Getting there:

Take Subway Line 1 to Pingguoyuan Station, then take Bus 326 and get off at Hetan Stop. There are buses there that run to Yanhecheng. Alternatively, take Bus 336 from Fuchengmen Station on Subway Line 2 to Hetan.

A train can also get you to Yancheng Station from the Beijing South Station. The ticket costs 10 yuan.

If you take a car, drive along Menzhai Road (Mentougou to Zhaitang) and at Zhaitang Dongli, head north.

Traveling from west to east

By Jackie Zhang

In northern Beijing, along the border with Hebei Province, there are four small villages regarded by their residents as "cities." City dwellers may not know these four "cities," but they played an important role in guarding Beijing against invaders in the Ming (1368-1644) and Qing (1636-1912) dynasties.

Robinson Zhao, who likes to drive out on weekends to places with interesting histories, has visited the four villages. "Even after war scenes fade from memory, the four 'cities' remain to remind people of the past," Zhao said. "The soldiers' descendants, what remains of the city walls, houses and temples are the best storytellers of what happened there."



The opera stage in Zhenbiancheng

Zhenbiancheng City

Zhenbiancheng was built as a military city to guard Beijing during the reign of Emperor Wanli (1573-1620) in the Ming dynasty. The "city" we see today is not the original one, but one rebuilt in the Qing dynasty. The old city, which is located five to six kilometers away from the present one, was destroyed by a flood.

Standing on the city wall, visitors can have a panoramic view of Zhenbiancheng. The city's east gate is old, its surrounding wall made up of blue bricks. Before the Cultural Revolution, the gate was seriously damaged. People took the bricks home, including the stele hanging above the gate with the characters Zhenbiancheng. In the early 1980s, the gate was repaired and recovered its original look.

Because of frequent wars in ancient times, the city

walls were built solidly. Marks from shellfire and bullets can still be seen on its face. Visitors can also see traces of aerial defense weapons used during the military confrontation between China and the Soviet Union in the 1960s and 70s.

There are three streets, six lanes and 72 hutongs in the village, all of which are paved with stone. Houses were built using stones as well. "There is a Drum and Bell Tower and 12 temples in the city. But now, only Dafo Temple remains," Zhao said. "The pine trees in the temple are more than 400 years old. There is also an opera stage over 300 years old. Painted pictures on the pillars are still visible."

The village is small and populated by only a few thousand people. Some are descendants of Ming dynasty



The courtyard used to belong to a wealthy local family.

soldiers and migrants. They revere Confucius, practice Buddhism, believe in gods and live according to the teachings of Taoism. They have kept these practices for hundreds of years. And speak in what is known as the "western Beijing" accent. Coming here is like being zapped to the past.

Getting there:

The convenient way is to drive along Jingzhang Expressway and drive out to the side road at Donghuayuan Exit. Then, drive south to the city. You can see the Great Wall along the entire way out.

Continued on page 21 ...

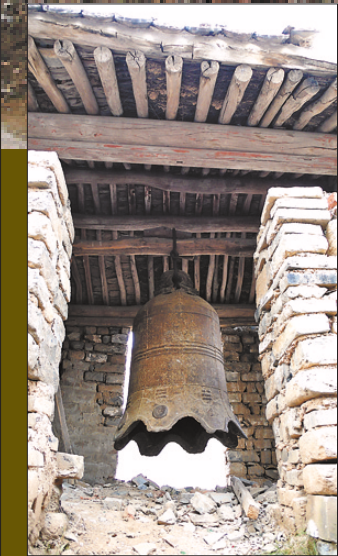
The Zhenbiancheng city gate



... continued from page 20

The well-preserved Yongxingsi Temple in Changyucheng.

Photos by Robinson Zhao



The bell at the Yongxingsi Temple has witnessed history.

Changyucheng City

To city dwellers, it may be the most famous among the four villages. People come here to hike the surrounding mountains in the winter. The snow is an added attraction.

The ancient city walls, the city gate and battlements can still be seen. Locals said only the archways in the village had been ruined in a flood. The temple village, situated on elevated land, is said to be hundreds of years old. Zhao said

the village Buddha was damaged during the Cultural Revolution, but the temple escaped destruction. A Ming-era bell can be found inside the temple.

Compared to Zhenbiancheng, Changyucheng is not well-structured. But one attraction is a well-preserved part of the Great Wall within its borders. Unlike Zhenbiancheng, Changyucheng is quiet at daytime and few people come out of their homes. The street lamps, which are powered by

solar energy, give a touch of modernity to the ancient village.

Changyucheng is best known for Shexi, a type of opera about religion and tradition that has a history of more than 100 years. On the 15th day of the first month of the lunar year, and on other traditional festivals, the village holds Shexi performances at its temple.

"All the Shexi performers are locals. There are over 30 people in the group," Zhao said. When

they are not busy with farm work, it is easy to ask them for an impromptu performance. If visitors want to watch for free, they should come on the 15th day of the first month of the lunar year, when there will surely be a Shexi performance.

Getting there:

Visitors can take buses to downtown Changping. Bus 345 can take you there. There are buses that regularly travel from Changping to Changyucheng.



Guanyin is sacrificed in Yongxingsi Temple.



Changyucheng's gate

Baiyangcheng City

Baiyangcheng, which was established in the Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368), has an interesting story behind its name.

It is said that when the village was established, it had no name. One day, a general of the army guarding the "city" had a dream: a young man in white clothes came inside his tent. His clothes were tattered and his body covered with wounds. He told the general he was a White Dragon trying to master the water in the area. But in recent days, a Black Dragon took over his territory, the young man said.

He asked the general for help. "Tomorrow morning, when you step onto the north tower on the city wall, you will see a black sheep battle with a white sheep. They are

embodiments of the Black Dragon and me. Please shoot the black sheep with a bow and arrow, so I can then defeat him," the young man said.

The next morning, when the general woke up, he realized the conversation with the young man was a dream. But when he stepped onto the north tower on the city wall, he saw a black sheep battling with a white sheep. The general shot the black sheep using a bow and arrow. But the black sheep was clever. He heard the sound of the arrow flying towards him and dodged it. The arrow ended up piercing the white sheep, and it ran away. The general regretted he was unable to help the white sheep, so he named the village Baiyangcheng, or White Sheep City, as



The Qingxi Qinwang Tomb



What remains of the white marble bridge.

an apology.

A relatively well-preserved fortress is on the northern city wall. A portion of the wall, situated in the mountains at the south side of the village, is well-preserved, protected by the forest.

A Qing dynasty tomb of Qingxi Qinwang, or brothers of the emperor, can also be found in the

city. A white marble bridge with carvings is the main architecture in the tomb area. Behind it is a pavilion with green glaze on its roof. There is one main tomb and four minor tombs. But in the Minguo Period (1911-1949), the tombs were robbed several times, and many structures were destroyed.

Getting there:

Drive along Badaling Expressway and drive out to the side road at Shahe Exit. Drive to the north to Yangfang Town and turn left at Gecun Village. Then, drive northwest. Road signs will gradually appear, pointing you to Baiyangcheng.

You can also take a bus to Changping, then transfer to another bus for the last leg of the journey.



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By Naomi Saunders

In this time of financial instability, many organizations are facing the tough challenge of motivating their staff. We are now entering the time of year, the Christmas and Spring Festival season, when companies traditionally reward a year's hard work with a raise, a bonus and company or department dinners.

This year, with strict budget cutbacks in place, most employers will not be able to match previous years' generosity. While some may believe that employees are lucky to have a job at all and should work harder simply to retain their position, experts in the field of motivation and productivity know that this is not the case.

People work hard for several reasons, but fear of redundancy is certainly not the top. So, as a manager on a shoestring budget, how can you continue to spread the holiday spirit and encourage your team's morale?

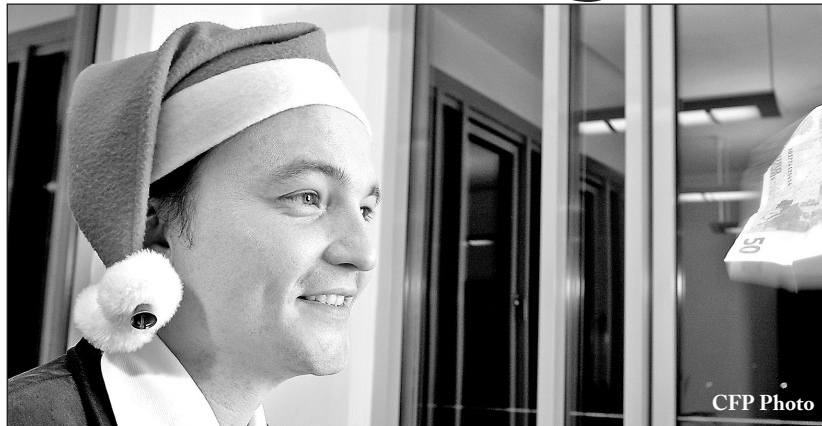


Naomi Saunders is a ClarkMorgan Corporate Trainer

Communication is the essential element of team motivation so you must be clear and honest with your team regarding changes. If you know that the end of year bonus has been cut and the maximum raise available is 2 percent, then communicate this to the employees as early as possible. If employees have the time and knowledge, then they can budget their own finances around the changes and therefore do not face the anxiety and worry caused by an uncertain future. Furthermore, reevaluate your team's goals and make sure they know what they are and if any reward will be available for reaching them. Nothing drives a team like a clearly defined goal.

Secondly, giving praise is a fundamentally important and inexpensive way to motivate staff. On a day-to-day basis remind people that they are doing a good job, reinforce their confidence and always remember to say thank you for working overtime or for a great result on a project. As a manager, you may also be feeling demotivated but luckily praise is cyclical. As you praise your team you will realize you are surrounded by talented individuals who look up to you for encouragement. Their smiles will give you the boost to get back on track too.

For the holiday season, why not invest the time in personalised Christmas or Spring Festival cards for each employee. Instead of a standard printed card from the company, each manager should write to their team thanking them for their specific talents and accomplishments for the year.



CFP Photo

"People work hard for several reasons, but fear of redundancy is certainly not the top. So, as a manager on a shoestring budget, how can you continue to spread the holiday spirit and encourage your team's morale?"

Studies by Harvard Business School conducted as far back as the 1920s have shown that fatigue and monotony have a negative effect on productivity. A friendly atmosphere with management and a feeling of being valued by the company have a far more positive effect on work levels than other perks, including cash rewards.

Therefore why not try something new to promote change and teamwork. If your budget will not allow for an expensive dinner or company trip you can still have fun right in the office. Why not allow employees to take an afternoon off to enjoy one another's company in a 'fun afternoon'.

This is also a great opportunity to single out individuals and boost their self-esteem. Try putting together a party planning committee to plan activities and competitions for the day. Encourage musical staff to perform a song or act for their team. If you have a multinational team then this is a perfect opportunity for groups to introduce their culture to one another with stories, music and other traditions. Many people will be willing to prepare national or regional food specialties to share with the group, keeping the budget at a minimum and everybody well fed. Remember to include yourself in the celebrations; provide snacks, drinks or best of all do a performance of your own. This will be valued higher than a restaurant meal by all.

This is a time of year for family, for love and for hope. You may not be able to shower your team with expensive perks but you can encourage a festive and friendly atmosphere which will drive your team to greater success in 2009.

Aviation

Chinese passenger assistants serve on SriLankan Airlines

SriLankan Airlines has made its Beijing service more convenient for Chinese passengers. The airline has added several Chinese passenger assistants to serve on board, all of whom have prior experience in the travel industry.

In addition to flying from Beijing to Bangkok and Colombo, the passenger assistants will be on hand to help out those at Colombo's Bandaranaike International Airport, including passengers in transit.

Lufthansa launches Overseas Study Networking Group for Chinese students

Lufthansa has opened an Overseas Study Networking Group at lufthansa.xiaonei.com to help Chinese students exchange information on European countries in terms of living arrangements, visa application, studying and travelling. The airline also introduced its new student fares from China to Europe. It starts at 3,300 yuan for a one-way trip and 4,500 yuan for a return. Taxes and surcharges are excluded. In addition, this offer includes many benefits for students, such as excess luggage allowance and provisional reservation without payment for up to two weeks.

Dining

BarArts: Liquids, Classic to Cool

Marriott International recently announced the launch of a global mixology program called BarArts: Liquids, Classic to Cool. Developed by world renowned mixologist Dale DeGroff and an international panel of Marriott and Renaissance bartenders, the BarArts program sets the company apart by using fresh squeezed juices in all of its core cocktail recipes, signature cocktails, premium products and unique or indigenous ingredients. The BarArts program is all about bringing the fun back, to make tending bar an artful skill again.

Where: Provincia, Beijing Marriott Hotel City Wall, 7 Jianguomen Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District
Tel: 5811 8888

A Hawaiian Christmas Party

Enjoy a real carnival evening on Christmas Eve with the music, song and dance from sunny island of Hawaii. Feast on a sumptuous Christmas buffet of traditional Christmas and Hawaiian fare prepared by Executive Chef Frank Bohdan and stand a chance to win a grand lucky draw prize.

Where: Crowne Plaza Park View Wuzhou Beijing, 8 Beishihuan Zhong Lu, Chaoyang District
Cost: 1,888-2,088 yuan net (Crowne Ballroom), 1,088-1,288 yuan net (Cafe Asia or Palm Garden)
Tel: 8498 2288 ext. 7204



Ultimate Festive Experience at Agua & Shiro Matsu

Agua and Shiro Matsu combine Japanese and Spanish flair to offer a seven-course festive menu paired with exclusive wines and vintage champagne. The dishes include some of the world's premier produce. The Agua menu offers specialties such as Beluga Imperial Caviar, Iberico Ham and Wagyu beef, while Shiro Matsu's offerings include foie gras, caviar and Alaskan King Crab. Presented with each will be a specifically paired wine and dessert selected by Agua and

Shiro Matsu's expert team.

Where: Agua Spanish Restaurant & Shiro Matsu Japanese Restaurant, Legation Quarter, 23 Qian men Dong Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: Before the end of January 2009 (must book nine days in advance)

Cost: 8,888 yuan (includes foods, wines, champagne, a perfectly selected gift and a door-to-door limousine service)

Tel: 6559 6266

HOTEL

Sunworld Dynasty Hotel

Rejoice in the excitement of the first Christmas at Sunworld Dynasty after renovation. The sumptuous gala feast, giant Christmas tree and special ornaments will bring more happiness to you.

Where: Sunworld Dynasty Hotel Beijing, 20 Wangfujing Dajie, Dongcheng District
Tel: 5816 8888



Pangu 7 Star Hotel Beijing opens to guests

Pangu 7 Star Hotel Beijing near the Beijing Olympic Park opens on December 6. Its 234 guest rooms are tastefully designed with luxurious comfort in mind. Entertain with style in one

of its signature restaurants, Kaden Minokichi, French, or its 26 private rooms of Pangu Wenqi Chinese Restaurant. Enjoy stunning views of the Olympic Park in Happiness Lounge, informal dining all day at Auspicious Garden restaurant and drinks in the Karma Lounge.

Pangu Grand Ballroom and three function rooms with top-end facilities can accommodate a full range of meetings and events. An impeccable VIP welcome at the aerogate, round-the-clock personalized butler service and the concierge will make your stay most comfortable.

Where: Pangu 7 Star Hotel Beijing, 27 Beishihuan Zhong Lu, Chaoyang District
Tel: 5906 7000 (By Sun Feng)

The rocky road to learning English

Chinglish story

This column focuses on Chinglish mistakes in our daily life. If you have any experiences to share, send them to Gan Tian at gantian@ynet.com.

By Annie Wei

There is no way to avoid embarrassing moments when a person is learning a new language. Although the person probably wished the ground would swallow up him or her when these moments occurred, the mistakes can be very funny in hindsight.

1 Cover me

The first time I played paintball was with a bunch of US students. Because I was not sure what to do, I just followed a guy named Ben who seemed to be an expert. Not long after, Ben and I were the last two people left on our team, but there was still one guy from the other side.

"It's easy and we're going to win," Ben said, "just cover me when I go out."

"Really?" I asked.

"Yes, and now cover me!" he said before running towards our opponent.

At that time, I did not realize that he meant I should back him up. When he said "cover me," I grabbed some clothes hanging on a bench beside us and threw them on his head.

Ben ended up getting shot with a paintball and everyone at the site laughed.

Ben got mad at me because our team would have won if only I understood what "cover me" meant.

2 T-bone

Although my boyfriend Lu Wei hangs out with ABCs (American-born Chinese) or BBCs (British-born Chinese), he rarely speaks English with them. His reason is simple: most of his foreign friends speak Chinese fluently, not to mention

that they laugh at his Guangxi dialect-sounding Mandarin.

Matt, a new guy in town from New York City, speaks no Chinese, but likes hanging out with Lu because Matt likes to make friends with locals. Lu cares a lot about his "dude friends," so he has managed to communicate with Matt in his limited English with the aid of improvised sign language.

Last Thursday evening, Matt dropped by Lu's place to say hello.

"You take a seat and I need to get some stuff from April Gourmet."

"What are you going to get?" Matt asked.

"T-back," Lu said.

"What?"

"T-back," Lu repeated.

"Does April Gourmet sell T-back? And by the way, did Annie make you do that?" Matt asked wide-eyed.

"Yes, Annie never cook," Lu said.

The next day, Amada, a girlfriend of one of the boys, sent me an SMS.

"I heard you don't cook and you made the guy buy you a thong last night," she said, teasing me.

Lu does cook better than I do, but I prefer buying underwear myself. But why would he go to a grocery store for lingerie? It did not make sense to me.

When I discussed this with Lu and finally understood what he was trying to tell Matt, I laughed so hard I had tears in my eyes.

When Lu said "T-back," he did not mean sexy women's underwear; he meant "T-bone" – a steak containing a T-shaped bone.

Chinglish on the way

This column aims to identify Chinglish in public areas. If you see any Chinglish signs, please take a picture and send it to gantian@ynet.com together with your name and address.



Welcome to Presence

By Tiffany Tan

"Huanying Guanglin" is one of those uniquely Chinese expressions; there is no English equivalent for them. Westerners would simply say, "Welcome" to greet visitors or guests. The Chinese version, which is more polite, literally means, "I/We welcome your presence" or "Your presence is welcome." Newcomers to China will be conscious of hearing this phrase everywhere

they go – in restaurants, supermarkets, department stores.

The usage of *guanglin* on the sign's English translation treats it almost like a person: Picture a big hall with an emcee on stage, calling out the name of VIPs as they enter. "Welcome to Mr. and Mrs. Li," "Welcome, Dr. Zhang," the booming voice says. "Our welcome to the Chen Family," "Welcome to Mr. and Mrs. Pan." Then, you hear this voice saying, "Welcome to Presence."

Local professor: Shida Zhu

1. Economical development

As a student of English, you have to distinguish between economic and economical. "Economic" relates to the "management of income, expenditure" or "production, distribution and consumption." On the other hand, "economical" means "not wasting money, fuel, time; thrifty." In Chinese, "economical" is *jieyue*, while "economic" is *jingjide*. There is a world of difference as you can see.

2. World-famous academies including the Academy of Arts are all included.

The problem with this sentence is that it is repetitive. In such a short sentence, the word "include" appears twice, which is not wise. You have two ways to avoid repetition: World-famous academies, the Academy of Arts among others, are included; or, World-famous academies including the Academy of Arts are all represented. With a little more thought to word choice, your sentence becomes a lot better.

Blacklist

Beijing Today has come up with Blacklist, a column of words or phrases commonly misused by Chinese speakers. If you're planning to be an English teacher, reporter or employee of a multinational company, then this page is your new best friend. Watch out for it each week.

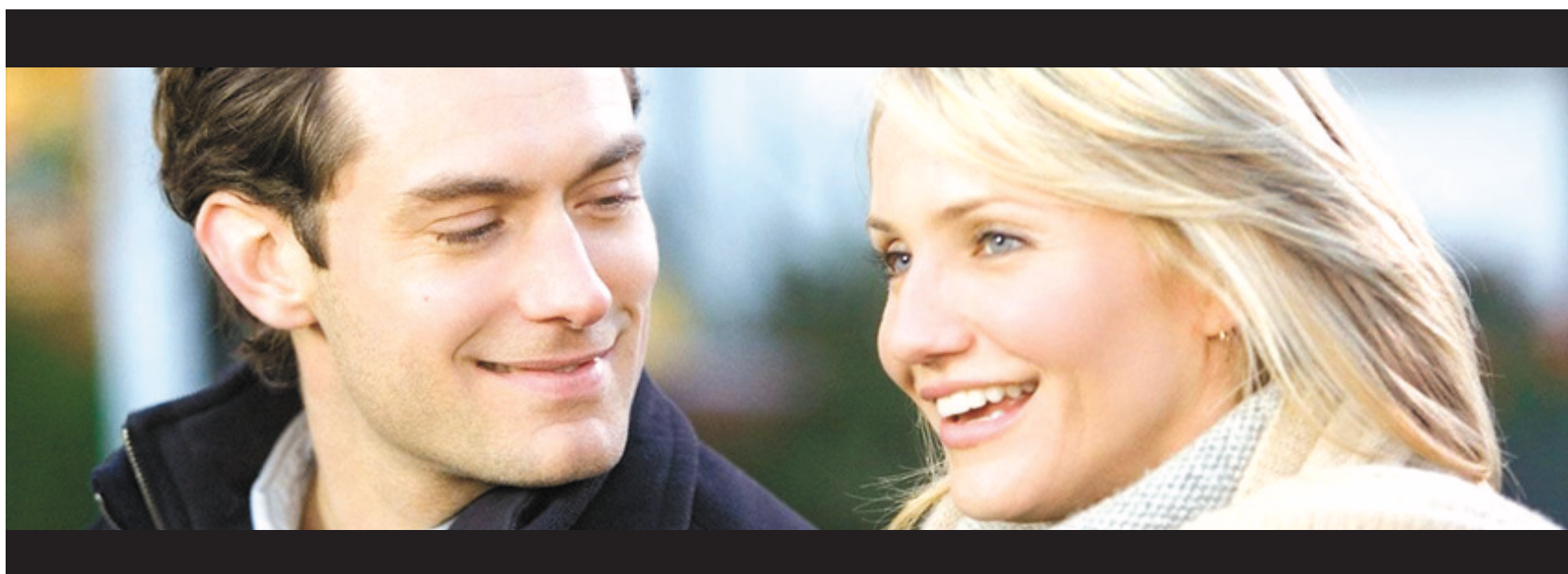
Native speaker: Penny Turner

1. Economical development

"Economic development" is the phrase the writer is after, which, simply put, means development in the area of economics or the economy. Every day, we encounter "economic" in news reports, in phrases like "economic crisis," "economic data" and "economic plans." The word "economical," on the other hand, can be used in a sentence this way: Because of the financial crisis, it is important to become an economical shopper (meaning, a thrifty shopper).

2. World-famous academies including the Academy of Arts are all included.

I agree with Professor Zhu that this sentence's main problem is the double use of the word "include," which makes the line look and sound awkward. Aside from the two substitute sentences that the professor suggested, the line can also be written in this way: "World-famous academies, like the Academy of Arts, are included" or "World-famous academies are included, like the Academy of Arts."



Movie of the week

Nancy Meyers, the writer and director, reveals her sensitive feelings and humor throughout the movie. Her comic elements distinguish the film from Hollywood routine. The movie introduces a new way to travel — house swapping, an idea sure to inspire many viewers when planning their next holiday outing.

the Holiday (2006)

Synopsis

Christmas can be torture for lonely people like American girl Amanda and British girl Iris, both reeling from the unfaithfulness of their ex-boyfriends. To escape the sadness they swap houses for the holiday. To their surprise, they get not only a change in scenery but a new chance to find Mr. Right on their journey of healing.

Scene 1

(Iris turns to a colleague for help with her ex-boyfriend.)

Colleague(C): You know, Iris, when you catch your guy with another woman ... you're not supposed to stay friends with him. You're supposed to never talk to the prick(1) again. You're supposed to throw things at him, scream, call him names(2). Not do his blooming laundry.

Iris(I): I don't do his laundry. Did someone tell you I do his laundry? No, no, all we do now is ... we email. Not when he's with her, of course. Also when he's not with her, we talk on the phone. Sometimes for hours. And then there's the occasional long lunch.

C: You know, I never realized how pathetic you are.

I: Really?

C: Oh, God. I'm so aware of it. They always know just how to get us, don't they? He knows whenever he wants back in your life.

I: Actually, he has made some small comments like that recently. He hasn't exactly come right out(3) and said it.

Iris's boss: Iris, did you file your story?

I: Oh, no, not yet. Down to the wire(4). Sorry. Better go.

Scene 2

(Amanda catches her boyfriend

Ethan cheating and decides to split up with him.)

Amanda(A): You know, I would never cheat on you, not under any condition.

Ethan(E): Neither would I, okay? Look at me. I'm down here sweating like a pig(5). And look at you. The only woman on Earth who breaks up with her boyfriend and doesn't even shed a tear(6)?

A: I mean, that's gotta mean something, right? Why does it bug you so much that I can't cry? Esophageal spasm. Oh, God, it's a big one. No, it's okay. I'll be all right.

E: I know, I know. I'm thinking about me.

A: Ethan, look, it's over. You know, we might as well(7) be honest with each other. Just tell me. Did you sleep with her? Just say it. What's the difference at this point, right? I mean, why torture me? Just put me out of my misery. What are we doing here?

E: Okay. Yes, okay? I slept with her. Are you happy?

Scene 3

(Iris's brother Graham goes to her house from a pub and meets Amanda.)

Graham(G): Iris, open the door, or I swear I'm gonna take a leak(8) all over your ... You're not Iris. Or if you are, I'm much drunker than I realized. I'm sorry for my profanity(9). I wasn't expecting you.

Amanda(A): Well, I wasn't expecting you either.

G: Nevertheless, may I just ...?

A: Yeah. Of course. Sure. You had to ... Yeah.

G: I'm Graham. Iris' brother.

A: Brother. I'm Amanda Woods. I'm staying here.

G: Amandawoods? Is that all one word?

A: No. No, it's not. (Whisper) Brother? Oh, my God.

G: So Iris is ... Where is ...? Where is she?

A: She didn't tell you?

G: She could have done but as previously stated, I'm ... I've just ... I've been ...

A: She's in Los Angeles.

G: That's not possible. Iris never goes anywhere. Well, we have that in common.

A: No, she listed this cottage on a home-exchange Website and I found it. We switched houses for two weeks. For the holiday. She's in L.A. at my house and I'm here.

G: People actually do that?

A: Apparently. Yeah. I mean, it seems. Here I am in my pajamas.

G: She did ring me last night. I didn't get a chance to get back to her. I feel awful now. Would you mind if I sat? I feel like I might bump into(10) you.

A: Sure. Yeah. Sit. You okay?

G: Yeah, I'm good. Look, I'm sorry about the intrusion. Although I may not appear it, I

am in fact Iris's semi-respectable big brother. But on the rare or lately not-so-rare occasion that I frequent(11) the local pub and get inordinately pissed, my little sister puts me up(12) so I don't get behind the wheel(13).

Scene 4

(Iris chats with playwright Arthur and they talk about the discarded invitation.)

Arthur(A): I counted. Nine movies are opening today. I remember when nine movies would open in a month. Now a picture has to make a killing the first weekend or they're dead. This is supposed to be conducive(14) to great work?

Iris(I): Arthur, have you always been this feisty(15)?

A: Well, I may have slowed down a little, but yes. You've gotta fight the fight, kid.

I: Okay, your mail. Gas company, phone bill. And a letter from the Writers Guild of America, West.

A: Are you watching the movies I recommended?

I: Yes! Love them. Irene Dunne is fantastic.

A: Gumption.

I: Oh, my God, tons of it. Arthur, don't you want to open that letter you just threw in the bin?

A: No. They keep writing me about the same thing.

I: But it might be important.

Vocabulary

1. Prick: someone who is completely worthless.

2. Call someone names: to use impolite or unpleasant words to describe someone.

3. Right out: outspoken.

4. Down to the wire: to the very last moment or the very end.

5. Sweat like a pig: to sweat a lot.

6. (Do not) shed a tear: do not cry at all.

7. Might as well: there is no reason not to do something.

8. Take a leak: to pass liquid waste out of the body.

9. Profanity: vulgar or irreverent speech or action.

10. Bump into: to meet by chance.

11. Frequent: to visit often.

12. Put someone up: to provide lodgings for.

13. Behind the wheel: driving a vehicle.

14. Conducive: likely to lead to or produce (a result).

15. Feisty: irritable and looking for trouble.

20. Fall for: to be deceived by.

(By Zheng Lu)

